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CNBC News Transcripts

SHOW: Hardball with Chris Matthews (9:00 PM ET) - CNBC

March 4, 2002 Monday

LENGTH: 1719 words

HEADLINE: Janine Zacharia from Jerusalem Post and Palestinian spokesman Hassan Abdel Rahman discuss today's Israeli attack

ANCHORS: CHRIS MATTHEWS

BODY:

CHRIS MATTHEWS, host:

So what do you make--we've got joining us right now, Janine Zacharia of--we've also got--she's with Jerusalem Post, and also Hassan Abdel Rahman. He's chief representative of the PLO here in the United States. Let's go to Janine first of all, Janine Zacharia.

You're not here to defend the Israeli government, but what did you make of the report--or the denial that they knew what they were doing when they shot at this guy and got his wife and kids by mistake? They claim--the Israeli government--they were really shooting at some troop carrier carrying some Palestinian Authority troops. Doesn't sound like a credible explanation for a pretty accurate army.

Ms. JANINE ZACHARIA (The Jerusalem Post): Well, unfortunately we've seen over the last couple of weeks some very not--not accurate hits by the Israeli Army. I think that the--the war is taking its toll and in fact there are--there has been some collateral damage or mistakes. And I thi--to assert or to suggest that the Israelis hit this car on purpose or to try to--try to kill women and children on purpose is...

MATTHEWS: No, no. The question is they were after the--the husband, who's obviously escaped.

Ms. ZACHARIA: Right.

MATTHEWS: And they end up killing a car with the wrong people in it.

Ms. ZACHARIA: It's terrible. It's...

MATTHEWS: And they apologized for that. But do you think it's credible that they were attempting to shoot that--the other car and not that car?

Ms. ZACHARIA: I really don't know. I don't have any--any information on the attack.

MATTHEWS: What do you make of this?

Mr. HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN (PLO Spokesman): I think the Israelis have no hesitation to target Palestinians as such.

MATTHEWS: Children?

Mr. RAHMAN: Whether they are civilians or not civilians. Because this is not the first time that the Israelis killed civilians. I mean, out of the 1,200 Palestinians that have been killed so far by Israel, 800 of them are civilians. This cannot be an accident. To kill 800 Palestinians...

MATTHEWS: Well, what do you make of--what do--what do you make of Al Aqsa? Al Aqsa is part of the--the al Fatah operation, right?

Mr. RAHMAN: Al Aqsa is loose...

MATTHEWS: Well, loose or not...

Mr. RAHMAN: ...volunteers...

MATTHEWS: Right. But this Fatah...

Mr. RAHMAN: ...Palestinian volunteers. Yes.

MATTHEWS: This weekend, one of these volunteers...

Mr. RAHMAN: Yes.

MATTHEWS: ...went into Israel and looked for a bunch of women standing with children at a bus stop and blew himself up so that all those women and children--so don't say that only the Israelis...

Mr. RAHMAN: I am not saying that. And I'm not say--no, no, no.

MATTHEWS: Do you accept the fact the Palestinians target women and children?

Mr. RAHMAN: Let me just finish what I'm saying. I'm saying that we opposed it. There was an official declaration by the Palestinian to condemn it.

MATTHEWS: Afterwards.

Mr. RAHMAN: We--afterwards. Of course we--we have not--it is an individual. There's a difference, Chris. When an individual kills civilians and when an army. A prime minister...

MATTHEWS: Well, this is becoming a--dueling apologies.

Mr. RAHMAN: A prime minister...

MATTHEWS: The Israeli government apologizes, your government apologizes. The people are going out, blowing up kids.

Mr. RAHMAN: When a prime minister orders the killing of civilians...

MATTHEWS: Right.

Mr. RAHMAN: This is an--a war crime and an international law.

MATTHEWS: You mean, this suicide's not going to have his--her parents or his parents taking care of, like, all the times in the past and rewarded for the death of the suicide bomber?

Mr. RAHMAN: I did--no, that's not the point.

MATTHEWS: It is the point.

Mr. RAHMAN: No, it's not the point. No, no, no.

MATTHEWS: If--if the family gets rewarded for this...

Mr. RAHMAN: Come on. Do--are we engaged in collective punishment? We--do we punish people...

MATTHEWS: Well, how about--well, like, how about--how about rewarding parents of kids who commit suicide as long as they kill a bunch of the Jew--Jewish Israelis?

Mr. RAHMAN: I want to ask you, those Israelis who kill Palestinians, is the Israeli Army going to pay them or not?

MATTHEWS: I would doubt it.

Mr. RAHMAN: They will pay them. And they will stay as soldiers. And they will be promoted, maybe by Sharon. Because we have not seen one single Israeli soldier removed from his post as a result of a crime committed against Palestinians.

MATTHEWS: What do you make of Sharon's brilliant move to ask Mubarak, who's visiting the president this week here in--in Washington, to put up a meeting between him and Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia? There's not a chance in the world, is there, that a--that a Saudi ruler's ever going to meet with a Jewish leader in history? Is it ever going to happen?

Ms. ZACHARIA: He probably knew that. And...

MATTHEWS: It's a game.

Ms. ZACHARIA: I wouldn't be surprised if Sh--if Sharon is somewhat disappointed in--in the fact that now Crown Prince Abdullah's suddenly the great peacemaker, and he threw out this idea to--to recog...

MATTHEWS: Is this a 'put up or shut up' thing by the--by the Israeli prime minister to say, 'I'm tired of hearing about this brilliant plan from the Saudi prince who won't even meet with me, so I'm going to ask Mu--Mu--Mubarak, recognized as one of the real moderate leaders of the Arab world to dare to ask the prince if he'll meet with me, knowing that he won't even ask him because it'll be a joke'? What do you think?

Ms. ZACHARIA: This--I could--it could be--that could be the right interpretation, absolutely. Because he knows that Crown Prince Abdullah is not going to meet with him right now.

MATTHEWS: Why? Explain it to the public watching now why a--why a Saudi leader would never meet with a Jewish leader from Israel, why they'd never do it.

Ms. ZACHARIA: Well, Hosni Mubarak himself said in an interview that it's because Saudi Arabia is custodian of the major Muslim holy sites and therefore it would be--it would be--he would come under a lot of pressure from his peoples in the Arab world if he went and did that right now.

MATTHEWS: Why should an Israeli citizen believe that the Saudis would ever recognize their right to exist as a Jewish state if the Saudi prince who pushed this plan won't even meet with their leader under any circumstances? Why would any Israeli believe this was credible, this proposal?

Ms. ZACHARIA: It's a difficult gamble for the Israelis. There's no--there's no--there--it isn't...

MATTHEWS: Gamble? Isn't it a sure bet?

What do you think, Mr. Rahman? What's your position as Palestinian spokesman about this whole question of the Israeli leader, Mr. Sharon, the prime minister, trying to get President Mubarak of Egypt to set up a meeting between him and the Saudi prince to talk about the Saudi plan?

Mr. RAHMAN: First of all, Sharon's problem is not with Saudi Arabia. Sharon's problem is with the Palestinian people because he is occupying Palestinian territories, and his problem is with Yasser Arafat. Instead of going to look to meet with Prince Aziz Abdullah, he has Yasser Arafat across the street, under siege. He can settle his problem with Yasser Arafat by meeting and negotiating with Yasser Arafat.

Mr. Sharon is engaged in a public relations campaign. He is not interested in a political solution. If he was, let him play Prince Aziz Abdullah game and say, 'Yes, I accept the Saudi'...

MATTHEWS: Do you think Mr. Mubarak...

Mr. RAHMAN: And--and then we would see...

MATTHEWS: Mr.--OK.

Mr. RAHMAN: ...whether the Saudis are serious or not.

MATTHEWS: Let--let me get--good--good question--po--point. Go back to my point, though, Mr. Rahman. Do you think President Mubarak--who's very much respected in our country here--as you know, do you think he should try to put together a meeting between the prince and the prime minister?

Mr. RAHMAN: I don't think he's going to try, even. And he will not do it. And Prince Abdullah is not going to do it. He will do it when Mr. Sharon accept his initiative. And then...

MATTHEWS: You mean, the-the Israeli has to say, 'I accept the plan to take back all our forces from the green line back bull--behind the '67 border, and then...

Mr. RAHMAN: The prince--give--give back--to give back to the Palestinians and to the Arabs their territories. In exchange, Arabs make peace.

MATTHEWS: Well, don't you have to--I mean, every deal has to be simultaneous. You can't say to the Israelis...

Mr. RAHMAN: Good.

MATTHEWS: ...'Give us everything we want and then we'll--we think we might recognized you.'

Mr. RAHMAN: No, no, no, no. We are not saying this. We are saying to the Israelis, 'Accept the principle.'

MATTHEWS: Ah.

Mr. RAHMAN: Then we will negotiate.

MATTHEWS: Which Arab states have accepted the principle if Israel retreats to its '67 borders, that they'll recognize it. Name one Arab state that's agreed to that principle.

Mr. RAHMAN: Egypt.

MATTHEWS: Well, they already have recognized them. I'm talking about...

Mr. RAHMAN: Jordan.

MATTHEWS: They already have recognized them.

Mr. RAHMAN: Sa--Morocco.

MATTHEWS: What new country's going to join the list?

Mr. RAHMAN: Morocco, Tunisia, Cattan, Bahrain, The United Arab Emirates. What are you talking about? Even Lebanon, Syria, will negotiate it.

MATTHEWS: They've all agreed to do this.

Mr. RAHMAN: Yes, absolutely.

MATTHEWS: When did that happen?

Mr. RAHMAN: Well--they--it happened two years ago and it's happening today.

MATTHEWS: Yeah. Oh, I--I've recog--I haven't seen the--the que of Arab states ready to recognize Israel.

Mr. RAHMAN: You have--that--if you did not, Mr. Matthews, that does not mean it does not exist.

MATTHEWS: OK. It also means that it doesn't exist.

Mr. RAHMAN: No, no, absolutely. No, it does not.

MATTHEWS: Anyway, thank you very much, Hassan Abdel Rahman and Janine Zacharia.

Up next, just how vulnerable was New York City to a nuclear attack last year? We'll have more on that Time magazine report just out today. And find out if US officials were prepared to sto--are they prepared now to stop the next terror attack. You're watching HARDBALL.

(Announcements)

LOAD-DATE: March 5, 2002





CNN Student News CNN February 11, 2002 Monday

**SHOW:** Hardball with Chris Matthews (9:00 PM ET) - CNBC**February 27, 2002 Wednesday****LENGTH:** 1855 words**HEADLINE:** PLO spokesman Abdel Hasan Rahman and John Wallach, author *In the Eye of the Beholder*, discuss Saudi peace proposal**ANCHORS:** CHRIS MATTHEWS**BODY:**

CHRIS MATTHEWS, host:

The violence continues in the Mideast today as a female Palestinian suicide bomber detonated herself and wounded three policemen on the West Bank. Earlier in the day Israeli troops killed four Arabs in ba--in gun battles, but a new peace proposal by Saudi ru--Prince Abdullah appears to be gaining support in the region. The proposal calls for "Israel to withdraw completely from the West Bank and Gaza and return for full normalization of relations with all Arab--other Arab countries." That means they're going to get recognized as a country with a right to exist. President Bush called Prince Abdullah yesterday to praise the proposal. But one administration official was quoted as saying, "It's not a plan, it's a vision," I guess putting it down. His son Abdel Rahman is the chief PLO representative in the United States, and John Wallach, the author of *"Arafat: In the Eyes of the Beholder."*

Thank you. Let's go--let's go to Mr. Rahman. What do you think of this proposal? Is it really catching on?

Mr. **HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN** (Palestine Liberation Organization Spokesman): I think it's very important. It is unfortunately for Israel to come on board and get us out of this whole mess that we are in. It is serious. The timing is good. It is the only game in town today I believe.

MATTHEWS: John Wallach, you've been a peacemaker of sorts over there with your efforts with getting Arab and Israeli kids together, Arab and Jewish kids together, to be particular. What do you think about a grand scheme whereby Israel does retreat back behind the green line, behind '67 borders, more or less, with some adjustments, in exchange for recognition by several Arab countries?

Mr. RAHMAN: I would expect them all to join.

Mr. JOHN WALLACH (*"Arafat: In the Eyes of the Beholder"*): Chris, you're asking the right question, because the key question here is: Is this negotiable, or is this a put up or shut up deal? In other words, is what--what Abdullah did he did publicly. He didn't do it, you know, behind people's backs. He didn't

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do it privately. I'm--I'm sure that the diplomats are pretty miffed because they don't like diplomacy to be made public.

MATTHEWS: Yeah.

Mr. WALLACH: That's--that's its importance that it was made public. The issue now is if this is a take it or leave it, in other words, 'Withdraw from every inch of the West Bank and--and Gaza, or we won't normalize relations with you; we won't recognize you,' this is non-starter.

MATTHEWS: Because Israel can never give up the religious, for example.

They're not going to give up all demands or claims on the--the Western Wall.

Mr. WALLACH: Well, even--e--even--that's right. Even in the negotiations that Barak and Clinton had with Arafat at Camp David, Israel was prepared to withdraw from 96, 97 percent of the--of the territories in--incorporating some of the settlements inside Israel, abandoning--abandoning others. But you've got to go back to 1967, Resolution 242. I don't mean to bore you, Chris, but what that said was the following. It said 'Israel should withdraw from territories



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not the territories. There was a big fight over that with the French and the Russians, meaning it doesn't have to withdraw 100 percent...

MATTHEWS: Right.

Mr. WALLACH: ...from every inch of land. It also talked about secure and recognized borders. Now, what's important about this is that the--the most important Arab nation, Saudi Arabia, the largest, the richest, is saying for the first time publicly, 'We are prepared to recognize Israel.' And that is very important. It doesn't say anything about secure borders. What kind of--what kind of security does Israel have?

MATTHEWS: Right. Well, let me ask you, the representative of the PLO, Mr.--Mr.--Mr. Rahman, do you think there's a possibility there could be some wiggle room here, as we say, in negotiations over what would make a secure border between the two countries, the new Palestinian state and Israel?

Mr. RAHMAN: It does--it did not say Israel insecure and recognized. It said the states of the region will live in secure and recognized boundaries. And I disagree...

Mr. WALLACH: But--but Hasa--Hasan...

Mr. RAHMAN: Hold on, John. John.

Mr. WALLACH: You're not saying that didn't mean Israel?

Mr. RAHMAN: No, I did not say that. I said all the states of the region.

Mr. WALLACH: Right. Absolutely.

Mr. RAHMAN: So the Palestinian state needs also secured and recognized boundaries.

Mr. WALLACH: Absolutely. Absolutely.

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Mr. RAHMAN: So second, it is your interpretation, John, that 242 does not call on Israel to withdraw from all the occupied territories. Because the preamble of Resolution 242 says the inadmissibility of acquisition of territory by force, meaning that those territories that were occupied should be withdrawn. Second, it is only Israel and the United States that do not share in that interpretation. But England, France, China, Russia, everybody else in the world calls on Israel to withdraw from the territories that were occupied in 1967.

MATTHEWS: Let's talk about the--the here.

Mr. RAHMAN: Second--yes.

MATTHEWS: Are you saying that the PLO or the--or the Arab position here is a complete withdraw or nothing?

Mr. RAHMAN: The principle that has to be accepted is the borders of 1967.

Now, if there is a slight modification on both sides of the line...

MATTHEWS: Right.

Mr. RAHMAN: ...that is necessary.

Mr. WALLACH: Hasan, I--I--I agree completely.

MATTHEWS: Right.

Mr. WALLACH: I don't disagree with that. But you go back to that '67 resolution, it did not say 'le territoire' it said 'territories.' And that--that...

MATTHEWS: OK. OK. We're going to come right back with both gentlemen...

Mr. RAHMAN: Well...

MATTHEWS: ...Mr. Rahman and also John Wallach.

Mr. WALLACH: That--that--that's the wiggle room for...

MATTHEWS: They're both coming back with this question: Can we find peace in the Mideast based on the Saudi plan? You're watching HARDBALL.

(Announcements)

MATTHEWS: Well, we're back talking Turkey to be honest about the--the

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questions of whether we can actually find an end to this horror in the Mideast which may be at the heart of some of the nasty public opinion in the Mideast. Abdel Hasan Rahman represents the public--the Palestine Liberation Organization here in Washington, and John Wallach, an old journalist pal of mine has always been interested in peace over there. He's the author of "Arafat: In the Eyes of the Beholder."

Let me ask you about the Arafat role here, John, because you are a student of this gentleman. Does he feel upstaged by the--the roar of Saudi Arabia offering this dramatic plan?

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Mr. WALLACH: Well, I mean, I think that that's self evident. You know, at the same time I think the--the relationship that he has had with the Saudis, you know, has been on--on and off pretty good over the years. And his public statements since this proposal has been made have been entirely supportive. In fact, Saeb Erakat, one of his closest aids, called it the most important initiative since the 1991 talks that took place in Madrid, which was the first time that--that Israel sat down with each of its Arab adversaries. So I--I think there's no question that this is a very important initiative. One other point I would--I would make, Chris, which I think is very important, this is like throwing a life raft to the Bush administration. You know, they've had no policy in the region.

MATTHEWS: They sure haven't. They've got a standoff policy, too.

Mr. WALLACH: It--it--you know, it's--the best--the best you can say about it it's benign--benign neglect.

MATTHEWS: Right.

Mr. WALLACH: So, you know, in effect, I think it's very interesting to sort of see...

MATTHEWS: Well, I would call it malignant neglect because they haven't been helping the situation.

Let me ask you, Mr. Rahman, do you think--do you think--those of us who are not from the region and watch this, it's just trouble all the time. We never pay attention to the Mideast unless there's trouble. Is--are you--is there any reason for optimism at all that Israel and its Arab neighbors will ever be at peace?

Mr. RAHMAN: Yes, because the overwhelming majority of the Palestinians want peace, and the overwhelming majority of the Israelis want peace. The problem is that at this point there are--there's a leadership in Israel that's not really committed to peace. Mr. Sharon has no peace plan. He was elected at a time...

MATTHEWS: Right.

Mr. RAHMAN: ...of turmoil. He has only one plan, and that is a military plan. And you cannot solve...

MATTHEWS: If you--if you had a great man like Yitzhak Rabin still running Israel, who hadn't been assassinated, would that be better off today?

Mr. RAHMAN: Absolutely. I think we would have had peace.

Mr. WALLACH: There's--there's no question. I agree with Hasan.

Mr. RAHMAN: I have--we--we would have peace.

MATTHEWS: You believe that, too, John? That if--if Rabin had not been assassinated--he was a tough warrior, but he was peacemaker. Do you think he could have put this together?

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Mr. WALLACH: You know, I asked Arafat at the signing ceremony in 1993, was when we did the book on him, he said I'm waiting for an Israeli de galle. And I

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asked him as he was going through the receiving line...

MATTHEWS: Well, they're waiting for a Palestinian de galle, too, I'm sure.

Mr. WALLACH: That's--that's right. But it was Rabin, your Israeli de galle, and he nodded yes. So I think we would have--I think we would have had--we would have had peace.

MATTHEWS: But the--your--your reference is clear to the fact that Charles de galle, the great hero of World War II, was the man who gave away Algeria, and it took a man of the right to give away a colony, right? And--and what--how does that parallel here?

Mr. WALLACH: Well--well--well, that's right, and I think that's why there are people who believe that Sharon, if he wanted peace, would be ideally in a position to--to--to make it. I mean, like Nixon going to China. But there's no indication...

MATTHEWS: But he seems to be...

Mr. WALLACH: There's no...

MATTHEWS: He seems to be almost di--dizzy right now politically, without a vision. Doesn't he seem to be that way?

Mr. WALLACH: Well, I think--I think that's the problem. And I think that's why the Saudi peace initiative is so important. That's why, when the White House said, 'This is a vision, not a plan,' they put--they put their finger on it.

MATTHEWS: Yeah. Anyway...

Mr. WALLACH: Because what they're doing is defining the end game. And the Arabs have--have, in the past, have not done that.

MATTHEWS: OK, thank you. We've got to stop. John, I'm getting all kinds of signals.

Thank you very much, Hasan Rahman, a great spokesman for the PLO.

It's great to have you, John Wallach, an old pal of mine.

And don't forget, you can get all the latest news delivered by e-mail. You can sign up for your free daily briefing. It's called [hardball.msnbc.com](http://hardball.msnbc.com). We'll be right back with WHAT I REALLY THINK.

(Announcements)

**LOAD-DATE:** February 28, 2002

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**SHOW:** Region In Conflict

**February** 26, 2002, Tuesday PM ET

**NETWORK:** MSNBC Cable Programming

**MEDIUM:** Cable

**LENGTH:** 88 words

**BODY:**

START: 32.32

Teased Segment - Saudi. You could consider it an olive branch. It comes from the Saudi prince. A peace initiative from Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. There is interest on both sides of the issue.

Visual - Ariel Sharon. The plan has received support from President Bush. Sharon would have many hurdles to beat. Charles Sabine reporting. Now for more on this peace initiative.

Studio Interview - **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, chief PLO representative to US, discussing the initiative.

END: 38.36

**SEGMENT-ID:** 15

CNN Student News CNN February 11, 2002 Monday

**PROGRAM-ID:** msnbc2100.0226.15

**LOAD-DATE:** March 29, 2002

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MSNBC

SHOW: ALAN KEYES IS MAKING SENSE 22:00

**February 25, 2002 Monday**

**TRANSCRIPT:** # 022500cb.462

**SECTION:** NEWS; INTERNATIONAL

**LENGTH:** 7155 words

**HEADLINE:** Any Hope for Peace in the Middle East?

**BYLINE:** Alan Keyes; Andrea Mitchell; Tom Aspell

**GUESTS:** **Hasan Abdel Rahman;** Alon Pinkas; Frank Gaffney

**HIGHLIGHT:**

With the reality of intensifying violence in the Middle East, is there any hope for peace in the region? A panel of experts from both sides of the debate discuss the issue. Also, what does the murder of Daniel Pearl mean for U.S. efforts against terrorism?

**BODY:**

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

ALAN KEYES, HOST: Hi. I'm Alan Keyes. Welcome to MAKING SENSE.

We have got a lot on our plate this evening. Later on, we're going to be talking about the terrible tragedy of Daniel Pearl and what that barbaric act means for overall U.S. efforts against terrorism. But first, we're going out to the Middle East.

We're going to be talking about a situation that has intensifying violence, what seems like a cycle that shows no signs of leading to a positive result.

We'll be asking ourselves whether there's any hope.

We have some guests on the program this evening representing both sides and our differing points of view, whether about whether the United States should be more or less involved in activities in that region in light of what appears to be the lack of a real basis for progress. But before we get to our guests, let's get the latest developments from NBC's Andrea Mitchell.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

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ANDREA MITCHELL, NBC NEWS CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): A Palestinian man and his pregnant wife rushing to the hospital to give birth, shot by Israeli soldiers at a roadblock. A day in the life of Israelis and Palestinians while politicians once again start to talk peace.

Her baby girl survives. Her husband does not. While south of Bethlehem, a nine months pregnant Jewish settler shot in the stomach during an ambush by Palestinian gunmen. She and her baby also survive. The day's toll: two infants born in trauma, five dead, and at least 10 wounded when Palestinians open fire at a bus stop in a disputed part of Jerusalem.

This, as Israeli newspapers herald a new peace proposal from the most influential Arab leader, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah. His plan: Israel withdraws from territory it won in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, giving

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Palestinians the state they have long demanded. In return, all Arab countries recognize Israel with full diplomatic relations and trade.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: It was a signal to the Israeli people that peace between Israel and the broader Arab world is possible.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Another acceptance from the Saudis would signal a normalization. It would embolden other Arab states to come on board.

MITCHELL: But will Israel start negotiating before a cease-fire?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I doubt however in the current violence that there's any Israeli who's willing to countenance a concession to the Palestinians.

MITCHELL (on camera): Tonight, Israeli officials are even inviting the Saudi leader to Jerusalem for unprecedented talks. But a Saudi official tells NBC News Israel is going to have to deal with Yasser Arafat, saying, quote, "If they want to talk, tell them to go down the street and talk to him." And so far, that is not happening.

Andrea Mitchell, NBC News, Washington.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KEYES: Looks like in this era again, a region that has many times in our lifetimes and in the lifetimes of those before us been a source of terrible anguish to everyone who sees what's going on there is causing that grief again. And we ask ourselves, is there any hope? Can it get anywhere? Is there anything that we can do to end that cycle of what looks like banal and senseless killing and violence on both sides?

We're going to be looking at some of the key questions this evening. We'll be asking ourselves whether there is, in fact, in light of what appears to be right now a deadlock and stalemate, still hope for peace in that region.

We'll be asking ourselves as well, which is fraudulent, the participants or the process? Something is wrong here.

And we really need to be getting to the bottom of whether it's the personalities involved or whether it's the structure, the concepts with which we

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have over the years been approaching this Mid-East region and conflict.

And finally, the question for the United States: what should the U.S. do? How can we, in fact, play a constructive role? Or is there one that we can play?

We'll be looking at those questions with a panel of experts later on in the program.

But up front tonight, we have Hasan Rahman, the Palestinian Liberation Organization's chief representative to the United States, and Alon Pinkas, the Israeli Consul General in New York. Gentlemen, welcome to MAKING SENSE.

As we look at the Middle East, that is, in fact, the real challenge for a lot of people in the United States and around the world, trying to make sense out of a conflict that in many ways in the cycle of violence and the deaths of so many innocent people seems to a lot of folks around the world to have long since reached a senseless stage. As we watch what's going on there, Hasan Rahman, is there, in fact, any hope that a process leading to peace can emerge from the events we see going on today?

**HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN**, SPOKESMAN, PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION: We have

no option but to be hopeful. But in order to achieve peace in our region, there needs to be an end to Israel's 35 years of military occupation of the Palestinians.

In other words, Israel must stop controlling the lives of the Palestinians, must recognize the Palestinians as its neighbors in a state of their own over part of their historic homeland, and the Palestinians will recognize Israel

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within the 1967 boundaries. This is the condition for a peace that will give hope for peace for both peoples, Israelis and Palestinians.

But if the Israeli government continues to want to control the lives of the Palestinians, to build Jewish settlements in Palestinian territories, to impose its whim on the Palestinians, I don't think that we can expect any peace in the near future. It is in the hands of the Israelis.

Today, we have Prince Abdullah, Saudi Arabia, coming up with an initiative that presents an opportunity for the Israelis to have peace with all the Arab countries combined. I think they should grab it because it coincides with international legality. It coincides with the conditions and prerequisites for achieving peace.

KEYES: Let's take a look -- wait, wait one second now. Let's take a look at the other side of the coin. Alon Pinkas, do you think that, in fact, Israel is now the chief obstacle as Hasan Rahman has portrayed it, to getting out of this situation and onto a path that can lead to a positive result?

PINKAS: No I do not, Alan. In fact, I agree with almost everything that Abdel Rahman said. The thing is that every time we sought to address that, every time we sought to solve that, every time we sought to engage or embark in a serious peace process, we have encountered nothing but hatred, terrorism, and violence on behalf of the Palestinians.

Now, what he calls occupation we thought we were on the verge of ending at Camp David last year. They refused and rejected the comprehensive offer that was

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made to them then. In fact, in modern history, there is no parallel or no comparable national liberation movement as the Palestinians are, which is predicated on nothing but the negation of another national liberation movement.

Now, as for what Mr. Rahman said about the chances or hopes of to peace, I agree with that, too. The demography, the geography, the inevitability of these two processes converging at some point towards coexistence is almost inevitable. The thing is that you need a credible, a serious, leadership on the Palestinian side, something that we do not have.

KEYES: So are you saying -- let me interrupt for a second. Are you saying, Alon Pinkas, that Yasser Arafat is, in fact, the obstacle to peace, that it's his lack of leadership that is creating the problem right now?

PINKAS: I am saying that Yasser Arafat has never been a serious statesman. I am saying that Yasser Arafat has never seriously transformed himself from a terrorist-slash-guerrilla-slash-semi-statesman into a serious leader that makes serious decisions, that is ready to act on them, to deliver them, and to seriously back them with the political will and political power.

KEYES: Hasan Rahman, the question -- one second before you answer, though. But the question I always have when I listen to this exchange is a very clear one. I don't think that you can make peace if you can't keep the peace. It's very simple formula.

But it's a question that I think has to be put to Mr. Arafat. If he cannot stop violence, how can he deliver peace because peace is the absence of violence? Does he have control over the forces on his side?

RAHMAN: You know, I think that the question is, with all due respect, wrongly posed. How can you expect a people who are subject to all forms of aggression and oppression on a daily basis to be able to provide peace to the aggressor? Remember that this situation is not the product of one month or two months.

This is a situation that is the product of 36 years of Israel's military occupation of the Palestinian territories, over which Israel has built Jewish settlements in the heart of the Palestinian territories.



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It's the next part of Jerusalem. It refuses to withdraw and imposes a state of siege on 3.2 million Palestinians, makes their life miserable. This is the only people today in the whole world that live under foreign military occupation. And, yet, we are asking Yasser Arafat to guarantee the security of the state of Israel. That's absurd.

PINKAS: What you need to do...

KEYES: One second, though, because you're still not -- I just want a simple answer, though. I understand the difficulties and complexities that you're pointing out. But part of what you seem to have said, as I hear it, is that in point of fact, given the situation in which the Palestinians find themselves, they cannot stop outbreaks of violence on their side. Is that true?

RAHMAN: No, what I am saying is that in order to be able to achieve that kind of requirements that you're asking for, Israel must change its attitude towards

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the Palestinians and its behavior in the occupied territories.

You just heard Mrs. Andrea Mitchell saying today a man accompanying his wife to give birth to his baby, and he was shot, and she was shot on a military checkpoint inside the city of Nablus. She was not shot in Tel Aviv. She was shot inside a Palestinian city. This is untenable.

KEYES: One second. Hasan, one second. Alon Pinkas, I listen to that, and obviously, we're all of us moved by the spectacle of violence on one side and the other. But I put to you the same question. Can Yasser Arafat be expected to make peace in a true sense if he can't keep the peace?

But if he, in fact, can't keep the peace, why does Israel go on acting as if they can deal with him on an equal basis? Isn't that, in fact, a delusion, that they're not willing to deal with Arafat on an equal basis because he can't deliver the goods?

PINKAS: Yes, in essence it is a delusion that we're trying to go around, for lack of a better alternative. If the Palestinians were a Democratic society, had a Democratic system with a due process of political change, then perhaps we could have negotiated with someone else. But if you look at their track record, if you look at their history, and let me run by you quickly the glorious accomplishments of the Palestinian leadership.

In 1937, partition was offered. It was rejected. In 1947, the U.N. Security Council partitioned the land. It was rejected. In 1967, after the Six-Day War, still in June of 1967, we had proposed to relinquish control over the newly-acquired-slash-occupied territories, however you choose to term that.

There was no one to talk to. Again in 1982, then the Oslo process, which never fully materialized because Arafat could not assert his authority.

Now, there comes a point where you have to say this is not about occupation.

You're going to have to trust me, Alan. Three-point-two million Palestinians are not our cup of tea. We have no reason, we have no want, we have no desire to control their lives.

KEYES: Can we serious expect, though, Alon, that the Saudi proposal that would take Israel back to the time when it had a waist, what, 10, 12 miles wide, that that is going to fly? Is that acceptable given the uncertainties that exist about the ability of the other side to keep the peace?

PINKAS: Well, that's a good question. I have not seen this proposal. Perhaps you have. Perhaps Mr. Rahman has.

What I have seen is a very nicely written column by Tom Friedman in the "New York Times" detailing a speech that has not been delivered, stuck in the right-hand drawer of Prince Abdullah's desk. There is a lot of importance that you should attribute to something called public diplomacy in the Middle East. I

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am awaiting this speech to be delivered in Arabic...

KEYES: Alon, I'm going to have to interrupt both of you. Wait, wait, wait, one second, interrupt both of you because we've come unfortunately to the end of our time. I hope that this will only be the first of our conversations because I think we're just, as always with the Middle East, scratching the surface. But I

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appreciate your taking the time to come out tonight and help us get a little closer to some understanding of the issues that are on the table.

Next, we're going to get to the heart of the matter with a panel of experts who will be looking at this from various points of view and asking especially a question about U.S. engagement in this process. Plus, our open phone line segment. You can call me at 1-866-KEYES-USA with whatever is on your mind. And later, my "Outrage of the Day," what some are calling a dangerous sexual activity.

But, first, does this make sense? In California, the supreme court there, the state supreme court has struck down the law that prevents criminals from benefiting from their crimes by getting ill-gotten gains, the proceeds of books and other things that they might put out as a result of their crime.

Now, let me see here. We deprive these felons of their other rights. We don't let them walk the street and go around doing what they please. The one right we're going to leave in their hands is the right to make obscene profits from their murders and crimes? Does that make sense?

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

YASSER ARAFAT, PALESTINIAN LEADER: I am repeating in front of you, we are committed completely to the peace of (UNINTELLIGIBLE) and the peace process.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KEYES: One of the key figures, obviously, in the Middle East, and one about whom all kinds of questions are now swirling in terms of his ability to act as a valid inter locker in a process that might lead to peace. We're talking about whether or not prospects for peace in the Middle East are now a hopeless cause in light of what appears to be once again a cycle of violence and deadlock on both sides.

Joining us now to get to the heart of the matter is Raymond Tanter, a fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. Also with us is Nancy Soderberg, once the U.S. representative to the U.N. Security Council and a member of former President Clinton's National Security Council. And Hussein Ibish, the communications director for the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee.

I want to start putting before all of you, but starting I think with Hussein Ibish, the question that I put to the two inter lockers in the first segment. We have in Yasser Arafat somebody who, whatever his intentions and so forth and so on, seems to be under a cloud now in terms of whether or not he can, in fact, deliver peace.

After all, if you're going to make concessions to somebody, one of the things that you want to get in return is a cessation of violence. And if the forces on that side of the table aren't under control, aren't under somebody's control, that means that peace cannot be delivered. If Arafat can't keep the peace, can he, in fact, make peace, Hussein Ibish?

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HUSSEIN IBISH, ARAB-AMERICAN ANTI-DISCRIMINATION COMMITTEE: Yeah, peace can be made between Israelis and Palestinians. This is not a conflict between two



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individuals, between Sharon and Arafat. It doesn't boil down to Yasser Arafat. It's about two societies at each other's throat. And they're at each other's throat because there is a military occupation going on. And people live under conditions, absolutely appalling conditions with no rights whatsoever under the control of a hostile and abusive foreign army.

As long as you have that occupation taking place in the face of half-measures and partial deals and slow-moving progress, I don't know. I don't think at this stage anybody can stop resistance, including violent resistance, against that occupation. The occupation has to end. It has to end...

KEYES: Wait a second now, Hussein. Does that mean -- hold on, hold on. Does that mean -- because I heard the same thing just now from Mr. Rahman. And it sounds to me like you're saying in point of fact nobody on the Arab side can, in fact, stop the violence.

IBISH: What I'm saying -- yes, in fact, Israel was unable to suppress...

(CROSSTALK)

IBISH: ... I don't think the Palestinian Authority will be able to do it either.

(CROSSTALK)

KEYES: Wait one second. I want to get to everybody. But let me go to Nancy Soderberg because that strikes me as unfortunately a very interesting both admission and problem, Nancy Soderberg.

In point of fact, if we're dealing with one side of the table, where for whatever reasons, could be historic, could be psychological, could be objective results of oppression and so forth, as they argue. But the truth is, if you're going to make peace, both sides have to be able to deliver a cessation of violence. Is there a prospect for peace, Nancy Soderberg, if that can't come about?

NANCY SODERBERG, AMBASSADOR, MEMBER, CLINTON NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL: Well,

I think the question is can Yasser Arafat stop the violence and pave the way forward for a renewed negotiation? I think the answer is, yes, absolutely he can. He's chosen not ever since the Intifada started a year-and-a-half ago. He has not done the 100 percent effort that Senator George Mitchell required of him. And what you have here is a situation spiraling out of control where you have an Israeli prime minister who was elected on a pledge to deliver security to the people, which he's failed to do, and Yasser Arafat who's on a campaign to show that the Palestinians are victims in order to try and exert more pain on the Israelis than they are on themselves, which is not exactly the way to get to peace or have an independent Palestinian state.

What you need to do is step back and restart negotiations. I think the Saudi offer provides perhaps a new dynamic that the Bush administration should step in

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immediately and take advantage of.

KEYES: Raymond Tanter, do you think that that is, in fact, the case? I mean, it seems to me we're looking at a situation here where Nancy Soderberg is suggesting maybe that Arafat is a fraud and that, in fact, he doesn't have the will to stop the violence. And yet, if he does not, what sense would it make for the Israelis to look at any proposal if in point in fact any concessions they make will not result in a cessation of violence?

RAYMOND TANTER, FELLOW, WASHINGTON INSTITUTION FOR NEAR EAST POLICY: Well, Alan, I don't think that Nancy said that Yasser Arafat was a fraud.

Nevertheless, let's face it. There is a war going on on the ground. And a peace process is not the way you end a war.

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Wars end when one side dominates the other side. And I think the Israelis have dominated the Palestinians, and the Palestinians should sue for peace. But for some reason, the Palestinians haven't felt enough pain, it seems.

So I think there has to be much -- I don't think the conflict is ripe for any kind of a peace process. And the Bush administration is doing precisely the right thing to leave the conflict alone until the parties themselves get to the point where they want to make some kind of an accord.

IBISH: Alan, what you're missing in your whole formulation here is that violence is not just one-on-one individual violence. The occupation is a system of daily violence.

Everything about living under occupation is violent. It means being surrounded by a hostile and abusive foreign army, pass laws, curfews, being shot at checkpoints, torture, living under separate and unequal laws. Everything in the occupied territories, every aspect of daily life, depends on whether you're an Arab or a Jew.

It is the most radical system of racial discrimination on the planet today.

I'm telling you that if all forms of violence are to end, the occupation has to end fully, completely and quickly.

SODERBERG: And Yasser Arafat has a way out of that, which is to end the violence and negotiate a lasting peace with Israel. And he has...

IBISH: But Israel won't do it.

SODERBERG: ... well, they had a very good chance with President Clinton towards the end of his term putting together a deal, which was maybe three percent, maybe five percent of the final deal. And instead of negotiating the last three to five percent, they started the Intifada. And we are where we are right now.

(CROSSTALK)

KEYES: Hold on, hold on, hold on a second because I want to clarify something that Nancy Soderberg just said. I mean, you're suggesting at the end of the Clinton years it wasn't a situation where there was no progress of any kind whatsoever. But in point of fact, we had reached a certain point where a certain

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kind of autonomy seemed to be handed to the Palestinians. Are you suggesting they didn't make good use of that opportunity?

SODERBERG: No question they didn't make -- I mean, you can argue that the deal was perfect or not perfect or close enough. But it was pretty close to what the final deal is going to be. And instead of negotiating the last small points that were out there, albeit very symbolic, they chose to resume the violence.

IBISH: This is just historically inaccurate.

KEYES: Wait one second. Hussein Ibish, why weren't they satisfied with that?

IBISH: Hold on. This is historically inaccurate. The Palestinians negotiated and continued negotiating up to and including the Tabah talks right before the Israeli elections in February. And there was progress made, according to both sides, in late January, early February, at Tabah.

So, that's not true. It's the Israeli government that cut off negotiations, all negotiations, in February because General Sharon wants to go for a military victory. He believes he can crush the will of the Palestinians, break them, and force them to accept Israel's rule over them.

KEYES: One problem, though, Hussein Ibish, one problem, though, with what I hear you saying, and I think it's what Nancy Soderberg is pointing to, is that a point had been reached where it seemed as if we were lining up forces on both sides. Arafat had an opportunity to try to put together security forces that would deal with the Palestinian side. And the Israeli response, the difficulty

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was that acts of violence and terrorism that claimed the lives of Israeli civilians continued. If that sort of war making continues, can a government just sit back and take it?

IBISH: Well, what I think has to happen is that the Israeli government has to face up to its responsibility as well. It has no business maintaining tens of thousands of heavily armed troops and hundreds of thousands of settlers outside of its borders. It has an obligation under international law to withdraw. Israel occupied southern Lebanon for many years and said it couldn't withdraw. Finally, last year, it did withdraw. The border has been quiet. If the Israeli troops and their settlers went back to Israel, the border will be quiet. If they free the Palestinians, then the Palestinians will leave them alone.

KEYES: Now, Raymond Tanter, go ahead.

SODERBERG: Can you get some kind of negotiation -- you can have this rhetorical debate all night and get nowhere, which is what is happening on the ground.

IBISH: That's an admission that I'm right.

SODERBERG: I think that you need to get a peace process going. And the truth is that over the last decade, the only time you've had -- more than that, two decades -- the only time you've had peace on the ground in the Middle East is when the United States led the effort to forge the peace.

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KEYES: Wait a second, wait a second, Nancy. If I heard Raymond Tanter correctly...

TANTER: Yes, I'd like to get a word in here.

KEYES: ... go ahead.

TANTER: It seems to me that Hussein Ibish should have been out in Salt Lake. He would have gotten the gold medal for being the victim of the year.

The Palestinians have to take responsibility for what's going on on the ground. As Nancy pointed out, the Palestinians had a deal at Tabah that they rejected. The Palestinians rejected deals in '37, in '47, in '82. The Palestinians have been boycotting the peace process. It's time for the Palestinians to shape up...

(CROSSTALK)

KEYES: Before you all start in again because we're coming close to the wire...

IBISH: That's inaccurate (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...

KEYES: ... Hussein Ibish, hold on a second. I have a thought that I want to leave with you because obviously our little get-together this evening is just the beginning of what I hope will be an ongoing discussion.

But I've got to tell you, what I hear from one side and the other suggests a couple of things. First of all, it suggests that we're not really going to make any progress if we don't see on the side of the Palestinians the development of some kind of cohesive, acceptable, valid political entity.

And I think that for the Israelis to fail to cooperate in that process means that they won't have a valid inter locker. But on the other hand, I think, Hussein Ibish, it sounds to me as if you're just stubbornly failing to look at a reality. People can't make peace if other folks are continuing to kill them dead. They won't accept that...

(CROSSTALK)

KEYES: Hang on. They won't accept that as peace.

IBISH: You're failing to see the most basic element of the facts, which is that the people who are the aggressors here are those...

KEYES: That doesn't matter...

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(CROSSTALK)

KEYES: ... One second. No, it doesn't. Hussein, you'll have to stop for a second. We'll get back to this I hope at some other time. But one thought I would want to leave with you, you can't take the victim status as an excuse for not bearing responsibility for the peace. That won't work.

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(CROSSTALK)

KEYES: No, no, it won't work. It won't wash if you continue to try it, it makes the whole situation hopeless.

(CROSSTALK)

KEYES: And I think -- hold it, hold it. And I think what I heard from both you and Mr. Rahman this evening suggests that you need to step back and ask yourselves, do we really want to portray the Palestinian side as if they are helpless victims who therefore inevitably and without any control must be impelled to violence, because if that's the case...

IBISH: That's not what we're saying at all...

KEYES: ... there is no hope of dealing with that.

IBISH: ... (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...

KEYES: ... Anyway, thank you all. I have to thank you all now. Thank you very much for coming in. Thanks for the lively discussion. Hope to have you back before too long to continue this chat.

Next, we'll turn our attention to the terrible murder of Danny Pearl and what conclusions we should draw from it about America's larger war on terrorism. And later, I'll get to what's on your mind, plus, of course, my "Outrage of the Day" and what some people in Congress are thinking about sex is probably more dangerous than what most people are doing.

But, first, does this make sense? What do Erskine Bowles, Andrew Cuomo, Robert Reich, Janet Reno, and Bill Richardson all have in common? Well, I'll tell you. They're all running for political office. And they're all running away from Bill Clinton as fast as they can. Erskine Bowles won't even put his name on his resume. Let me tell you that.

Here are people who stood proudly with him during the administration. Now they have forgotten who he is, apparently. Do you think that that makes sense?

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KEYES: Obviously, over the course of the weekend, the barbaric murder of "Wall Street Journal" reporter Daniel Pearl has been on all our hearts and minds. We obviously react with grief but also with outrage. In a sense, as we responded to September 11, as we have to the whole terrorism -- something must be done.

Before we get to our guest, Frank Gaffney, to talk about that very question.

Here's NBC's Tom Aspell, reporting tonight from Karachi.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

TOM ASPELL, NBC CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Handcuffed, hooded and under heavy guard. Chief suspect Sayeed Omar Sheikh and two of his accomplices at Karachi's high court today. Ordered jailed for another two weeks while police

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look for the body of Daniel Pearl.

Four months ago, the U.S. Justice Department issued a secret indictment for Sheikh for kidnapping another American in India in 1994. Indian police rescued him and three European hostages and captured Sheikh then, but freed him five years later in exchange for more than 160 passengers on an Indian airliner hijacked to Afghanistan.

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In early January, American Ambassador Wendy Chamberlain pressed Pakistani officials to find Sheik and send him to the U.S. But before he could be caught, Sheik apparently enticed Daniel Pearl to a meeting, which is led to his disappearance and brutal execution.

President Bush said in Washington today the U.S. wants Sheikh extradited from Pakistan.

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: We're always interested in -- in dealing with people who have harmed American citizens.

ASPELL: While Pakistani and American law officers hunt for more evidence against Sheikh, details of his kidnapping career in India are emerging.

(on camera): Sheik used a natural charm and a first class British education to lure his victims, easily making friends with foreigners impressed by his language skills and intelligent conversation. Sheikh met British tourist, Trevor Matthews in India eight years ago. He invited him sightseeing but turned up late for their appointment. Matthews changed his mind and probably saved his own life.

TREVOR MATTHEWS: There were plans made here. And I should have been -- I still think I should have been the first person that he abducted.

ASPELL: When Matthews found out later Sheikh had kidnapped four other foreigners, he was totally surprised.

MATTHEWS: He seemed too much of a gentleman, almost too considerate to actually draw a gun on someone and hold them captive.

ASPELL: Without Daniel Pearl's body and the murder weapon, the case against Sheik in Pakistan is incomplete. But he's now on America's list of wanted terrorists and could soon face trial in the U.S.

Tom Aspell, NBC News, Karachi.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KEYES: Joining us now is Frank Gaffney, the founder and president for the Center for Security Policy. Frank wrote a piece in today's "Wall Street Journal" entitled How America Must Respond to barbarism.

Frank, welcome to MAKING SENSE.

FRANK GAFFNEY, CENTER FOR SECURITY POLICY: Thank you, Alan.

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KEYES: As we look at the Daniel Pearl tragedy, and the response of the American people to that tragedy, I think it's always a combination of both grief and compassion and outrage against the evil perpetrators of the deed. I myself think, though, that we have to avoid the temptation to see this just in terms of this particular act and reacting to it.

How do we set it in the larger context of the on going war that we have to fight against terrorism? A point I think that you made very well in your piece today?

GAFFNEY: Well, I completely agree. I think that the way we have to look at it is it demonstrates that we as individuals are on the frontlines of this war on terrorism. It's not just, as September 11 demonstrated, we are all in some sort of random way at risk in our own country of a terrorist attack of some kind, but if we travel overseas, as many of us do whether for study or for business or for commerce of some other kind -- or simply to travel and experience the world. We are now, unless there is a very clear signal sent to those who are thinking of emulating Danny Pearl's kidnappers, we are all perspective targets for this kind of terrorist attack.

KEYES: Now tell me --

GAFFNEY: That's why I think the president has got take this war to the terrorists.



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KEYES: Well, how do we do that? I think that is a point that I guess a lot of us have been making for quite some time in terms of the need to really find a way, to be aggressive and proactive and carrying this war to the terrorists. He mentioned in the State of the Union Address that there are cells all over the world. What, in fact, is the kind of response that's going to help in terms of eliminating the actual terrorists who are doing these kinds of things and posing this threat?

GAFFNEY: Well, I think it's sort of a three-part problem. The first part we've seen playing out, I'm delighted to say in Afghanistan, where we've gone after one of the most egregious safe havens of terrorists, and we've basically put it out of business.

We've put, at least the al Qaeda leadership and forces, and their Taliban sponsors on the run. There needs to be a second phase, the president alluded to that in the State of the Union Address where we look at, and bring pressure to bear in appropriate ways on other state sponsors of terrorism.

And then a third part is, I think, we have to send a very powerful signal, by prosecuting, or as the president very colorfully put it, bringing justice to those who have done things like what Danny Pearl is doing --

KEYES: Let me interrupt you for one sec, though, because it seems we talk around this subject. We speak in euphemisms. I know it might be a little difficult to put it directly. But let me try to put it directly. Isn't it the case that if there are in fact people like this in cells around the world, that we have to try to find out who they are and where they are, and basically eliminate them before they eliminate them before they eliminate them before

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Americans?

GAFFNEY: Yes, I think that's right. The word that is in some vogue thanks to Don Rumsfeld candor is we have to kill them.

KEYES: Yes, I think that that is the part, because lot of Americans seem to shy away from this possibility somewhat. And yet I don't see what the alternative is. If, in fact, we are fighting a war, we must carry that war to the enemy. And what other way is there with these terrorists, but to seek them out and to wipe out their cells before they're able to act.

GAFFNEY: Well, I don't think there is a way. It's difficult because of limitations on intelligence, always to know where they are or who they are before they act. But I think a much more proactive approach, and one that, as we've talked about before, Alan, requires a different approach to intelligence, namely the use of human resources to penetrate these cells and establish who are the enemy and what are they up to is absolutely paramount at this point. And I hope this is an approach the administration is adopting.

KEYES: Now given the fact that as the president himself has said, you have these kinds of cells and organized structures in different parts of the world, you must deal with the sponsor states and the facilitators. But isn't it the case in Europe and elsewhere you're liable to find these kinds of cells, don't we need, in fact, to have a structure of international cooperation that will allow us to identify and go after these people without ruffling too many feathers in other countrys?

GAFFNEY: Well, it certainly is to be preferred. The danger is in cases where some of the governments are actually aligned with these folks, an example being Pakistan. Where there's reason believe, and there's some very interesting reporting on it in today's papers, the Pakistani Intelligence Service may well have been implicated in some aspects of this kidnapping and perhaps even in the execution of Danny Pearl. That's a problem.

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The French who are very well established appeasers of terrorism have said well, you can operate here, just don't do anything against us. You have other countries, of course, where you have, notably in Iraq, I believe active support, and arming of terrorists taking place. These are different kinds of problems that require different solutions, but you're absolutely right. It would be far preferable to have people's help, but in the absence of it, I think we are going to have to be willing to and be able to act with some independence against these terrorists.

KEYES: And that would mean that we would have to be willing to put together the kind of elite teams and forces that are needed sometimes to deal with these cells, other training camps, things like this and basically move across international borders into these countries in order to wipe them out in a timely way before they can strike against us. Do you think we have to basically have the will and resolve to take that kind of step?

GAFFNEY: Well, I think we do have to have the will and resolve. I think we have the capability. I think we have got elite forces and covert operations forces that are capable of these kinds of missions. The Israelis have been doing it in their defense for a long time, and I think we have to be and be willing to

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do it in ours.

KEYES: Thank you, Frank, I really appreciate that. I appreciate your being with us.

We are, in fact, going to be getting further into this very topic. On this show tomorrow. We've assembled some folks to talk further about the kind of proactive policies that are needed, what their implications are, what kind of structures we might put together diplomatically and otherwise to facilitate what needs to be done.

You'll want to stay tuned for that discussion of the real war on terrorism in its actual and proactive phase as we'll be trying to do it tomorrow here on this program.

Later, on this very show, my outrage of the day! But first, I want to hear what's on your mind. Your watching MSNBC, the best news on cable.

ANNOUNCER: Alan Keyes is MAKING SENSE on MSNBC.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KEYES: Welcome back to MAKING SENSE. Now, I have a chance to have some fun. Get to find out what's on your mind. We're going to go first to Scott in Florida. Scott, are you MAKING SENSE?

CALLER: Oh, I'm MAKING SENSE, Alan. I don't know about some of your guests. I think that the Israelis should get out of the Palestinian occupied territories. And I know if somebody were occupying here in the United States, that I would probably be doing the same thing as the Palestinians.

KEYES: Well, you know, there is a history to that, though, Scott that we can't forget. Given the fact that the Israelis took these territories during the '67 war after they were aggressed against by Arab states who had refused to accept their existence for decades.

And so part of what's going on here is to try to achieve some kind of negotiated settlement after many years of warfare which resulted in the Israelis holding on to this territory. And that's part of the reason that we're faced with the situation we are. Scott, thank you for your call.

CALLER: Sure, no problem.

KEYES: Let's go to Robert in New York. Robert, welcome to MAKING SENSE.

CALLER: Hello, Mr. Keyes. You're absolutely right about the 1967 war and I commend you for saying it.

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I'm calling about the suicide bombers in Israel. America would never accept suicide bombers blowing up our civilians in restaurants, malls and other public areas in American cities, but would respond with overwhelming military force. Why should Israel sit idly by and do nothing to protect their own citizens from these suicide bombers who are considered heroes and martyrs by the Palestinians and the Arab world.

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KEYES: Well, I agree with you, Robert. I don't see how we could expect the Israelis to accept that. That's one of the reasons why I put such an emphasis on the need to conduct negotiations by requiring, expecting, in fact, that both sides will keep the peace. And until Arafat proves that he can, I think there's going to be real difficulty in this so-called process.

Let's go to Hank in New Jersey. Hank, welcome to MAKING SENSE.

CALLER: Hey, Alan, I'm a long-time admirer and I voted for you.

KEYES: Thank you. I appreciate it.

CALLER: The Palestinian spokesman before asked how can people oppressed have peace with their oppressors? And all I can say is, Alan, tell them about Martin Luther King Jr. Jesus loves you.

KEYES: Thank you, Hank. Really appreciate it. Martin Luther King, Mahatma Ghandi, others who found ways to deal with oppression. And I think that's a reason, by the way, a lot of people don't realize why non-violence was such an important tool in their hands. Because it showed that oppression did not objectify the oppressed that, in fact, they were still the masters of their own fate and will and soul.

Quickly to Nate in California. Welcome to MAKING SENSE.

CALLER: Hi, Alan. I was wondering if you could answer a question for me.

KEYES: I'll try.

CALLER: What's -- because I'm too young to remember -- what's the difference between Iran supporting the Hamas and us supporting what we call freedom fighters such as the Contras?

KEYES: Well, I think, first of all, we're looking at two very different situations. In our particular case, we were trying to maintain a path towards some kind of freedom and democracy in our hemisphere against those who were establishing governments to repress that, and basically helping people fight for their freedom.

I think in the Middle East you have differences that go back to ideology, to territory, and people are feeding the flames of that violence in such a way as to prevent peace from coming about. So the results and the objectives are very different.

Thank you for your calls and e-mails. Next, my out rage of the day. Some folks back there on Capitol Hill are having strange ideas about what constitutes dangerous approaches to sexuality. I'll tell you about that when we get back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KEYES: President Bush in his budget actually proposed an increase for abstinence only education with respect to human sexuality. But three representatives in the Congress, James C. Greenwood of Pennsylvania Republican, California Democrat Barbara Lee and Lynn Woolsey said in a letter to President

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Bush a few days ago, that in point of fact, abstinence-only education is dangerous and unnecessary. So let me see here, Colin Powell recommending condoms which has a one in six chance of failing, like playing condom roulette with one bullet in the chamber -- that's safe and wonderful? But if we tell the kids not



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to engage in this dangerous behavior at all at their ages, then that's dangerous? Ha! That's an outrageous statement and they ought to know it. That's my sense of it. Lester Holt is up next. See you tomorrow.

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CNBC News Transcripts

**SHOW:** Hardball with Chris Matthews (9:00 PM ET) - CNBC

**February 22, 2002 Friday**

**LENGTH:** 1095 words

**HEADLINE:** PLO's **Hasan Abdel Rahman** and Israeli consul Alon Pinkas discuss a Washington Post story which alleges that Yasser Arafat pulled a gun on his security chief during an argument

**ANCHORS:** CHRIS MATTHEWS

**BODY:**

CHRIS MATTHEWS, host:

So who's in charge of this picture? Is there a rift in the Palestinian Authority? The Washington Post is reporting today that Yasser Arafat pulled out a gun on one of his top deputies, Mr. Rajoub, the security chief of the West Bank, during a discussion about a jail break in Hebron. **Hasan Abdel Rahman** is the chief representative for the PLO here in the United States, and Alon Pinkas is the Israeli consul general up in New York.

Let me ask you this, Mr. Rahman. What do you make of your--your guy pulling a gun on one of his guys?

Mr. **HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN** (PLO Spokesman): First of all, I don't think it is true. It's a rumor. Even the story in the Washington Post does not say it happened. They said that there were rumors that it happened. My information that it did not happen...

MATTHEWS: I can't believe they said 'rumors,' but go ahead.

Mr. RAHMAN: Yes. I did...

MATTHEWS: I've never heard the Post report rumors.

Mr. RAHMAN: I saw the--the report, and I spoke to the people there. You know, you have a little discussion, but I think it is--it is blown out of proportion, even the Washington Post story.

MATTHEWS: Does Mr. Arafat carry a gun?

Mr. RAHMAN: He always carries a gun.

MATTHEWS: Does he ever draw it?

Mr. RAHMAN: I don't know. I--I didn't see him do that.

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MATTHEWS: See, most world leaders don't carry sidearms. That's why it confesses a reasonable discussion point.

Mr. RAHMAN: No. I don't think that's really very important issue. First of all, the relationship between Jibril Rajoub and Yasser Arafat is a very close relationship. They have worked together for the last 21 years. I know how close to each other they are. They might have had a disagreement over something, but it is not to the extent where it was reported in the media.

MATTHEWS: Was there--let me just get to the bottom of the quarrel, apparently, between Arafat and his deputy--security chief. It concerned the release of some prisoners that were under the custody of the pi--Palestinian Authority. Do you know about that aspect of the story?

Mr. RAHMAN: Again, it is rumored. I don't think there were many people there. There were only two people sitting there, and I don't think any of them

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spoke to the media about what happened.

MATTHEWS: Mr. Ambassador, what is the story in--in Israel right now that you are getting about this incident--alleged incident involving Yasser Arafat pulling a gun, allegedly--reportedly, on his security chief just the other day?

Mr. ALON PINKAS (Israeli Consul General): All part of Palestinian folklore, but I have to tell you, Chris, that I tend to agree with **Hasan Abdel Rahman** that whether or not it's true, or not, it's almost irrelevant. What is relevant are the interviews that Arafat gave to you--to this network, to Ashleigh Banfield, to Mike Wallace and "60 Minutes," to the BBC--in which he portrays--portrayed much more hysteria and panic than this supposed incident illustrates.

MATTHEWS: What do you make of the fact, Mr. Rahman, who--you represent the PLO, the Palestinian Authority here in Washington--after weeks and weeks of having Mr. Kanafani, your colleague, report on this show and deny again and again any responsibility for the arms shipment that came over in January from the Hezbollah located in Iran. Now Mr. Arafat himself, according to Colin Powell, who is no right-winger, says that Arafat has now accepted responsibility for that attempt to ship arms to--to--to the Palestinians. What do you make of that admission?

Mr. RAHMAN: I saw the letter. I was in the meeting with Mr. Colin Powell. What was--what Yasser Arafat said was that, 'in my capacity as the chairman of the PLO, I take responsibility to investigate and punish those who are responsible.' Mr. Colin Powell did, in his testimony before Congress, never said that Arafat was personally involved. He said that he takes responsibility in his capacity as the chairman.

MATTHEWS: What does that mean?

Mr. RAHMAN: That you are the chairman of the PLO, and if any of your people is involved, you investigate and punish them.

MATTHEWS: But all these weeks have passed and his responsibility has led him to do what? What has Yasser Arafat done holding this enormous responsibility for making sure arms don't reach his ar--his government?

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Mr. RAHMAN: One of the people who is accused of being involved is in jail, and he is being tried in public before the media of the world. So let's wait before we indict the per--president.

MATTHEWS: No, I'm not indicting him. I'm accepting his confession. What do you make of this, Mr--Mr. Ambassador, that Yasser Arafat admitted responsibility for that arms shipment? Alon?

Mr. PINKAS: Oh, yeah. I didn't understand you were referring to me, Chris. Look, I can't tell you that I'm impressed or that I'm shocked and that I'm falling off my chair that he expressed responsibility. The fact of the matter is--look, first they denied it and then they lied about it. Then they said that it's fabricated, it's just a forgery, it's a fraud that--it's a James Bond thing. Now--now they are taking responsibility. The fact of the matter is that anyone who understands and knows and is familiar with how the Palestinian Authority operates, fully understands that someone like Fuad Shubaki, who is the man responsible for the ship, could not--absolutely could not have done this without the knowledge of Arafat. Now, if the one percentage possibility that--that Arafat did not know about this, this goes to the heart of the matter with his ability or power or authority to actually rule and exercise power. If he did not know, then how could we ever seriously negotiate with him if he can't control something like a ship full of arms, 55 tons worth of arms. But--but if you ask me...

MATTHEWS: OK, last word. Last word, Mr. Rahman.

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Mr. RAHMAN: Mr. Pinkas, loyal to his side here, ne--never fails to attack the PLO and the Palestinians. The truth of the matter is, Yasser Arafat--even Colin Powell said that we have no evidence that Yasser Arafat is personally involved. But in his capacity as a chairman of the Pale--PLO and the Palestinian National Authority, he will investigate. That is the story.

MATTHEWS: That was my conversation with Israeli Consul General Alon Pinkas and PLO Spokesman **Hasan Abdel Rahman**.

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(Announcements)

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CNBC News Transcripts

**SHOW:** Hardball with Chris Matthews (9:00 PM ET) - CNBC

**February 19, 2002 Tuesday**

**LENGTH:** 1574 words

**HEADLINE:** Israeli Consul General Alon Pinkas and PLO spokesman **Hasan Abdel Rahman** discuss solution to Israel/Palestine conflict

**ANCHORS:** CHRIS MATTHEWS

**BODY:**

CHRIS MATTHEWS, host:

Thank you. I don't hear anything.

In the Middle East today, Palestinian gunmen killed at least six Israelis at an army checkpoint. Earlier, Israeli gunships had killed eight Palestinians. All this as Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is coming under political fire from all directions. The New York Times reports, quote, "Rightists are accusing Mr. Sharon, storied for his fierceness as a general, of going soft on the Palestinians. Leftists are accusing him of using too much violence. Both sides here agree on one complaint: that he has no plan for ending a conflict that in it's 17th month shows every sign of getting deadlier."

Let me go to Alon Pinkas. He's the Israeli consul general. He's up in New York. I have joining me here **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, he's the chief PLO representative here in the United States.

Ambassador Pinkas, let me ask you the question, is this article correct? Did Mr. Sharon, the prime minister of Israel, have no plan to end this intifada II?

Mr. ALON PINKAS (Israeli Consul General): Yes, it's correct. He doesn't have a plan because the plans are there and--and he has evoked them time and again. They're called the Tenet plan and the Senator George Mitchell plan. He doesn't need to come up with a plan. The plan is there, the introduction to the plan via the director of the CIA is there, the Tenet plan. Camp David is still there.

Oslo has never been revoked. The entire mechanism of Israeli/Palestinian agreements supposedly is intact. But what made them collapse and made this seem intractable is--is the Palestinian's total failure in standing up and living up to expectations and promises.

MATTHEWS: Mr. Rahman, the United States government, under George Bush, has made a decision, apparently, months ago to put all our money on Sharon, Ariel Sharon, and not even to talk to Yasser Arafat. What do you think of that decision?

Mr. **HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN** (Palestinian Liberation Organization Spokesman): I

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think Sharon has failed the Israeli public both politically and militarily. Mr. Sharon has only one plan, and that is to kill more Palestinians, to destroy more Palestinian homes...

Mr. PINKAS: Not true.

Mr. RAHMAN: ...and to keep Palestinians under state of siege. You have 3.2 million Palestinians who are taken hostage by Israel against their will, controlled by the Israeli Army. If Mr. Pinkas is serious about finding a solution for this, why he does not call for an Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied territories, and we can build our own state next to their state and live in peace today?

MATTHEWS: You mean, give up the Wailing Wall?

Mr. RAHMAN: No, they can kee--we can...

MATTHEWS: Give up the old--old wall, Western Wall?

Mr. RAHMAN: No, we can--no, no, no. I did not say that. I said the Wailing Wall and Western Wall we have agreed to Israel's sovereignty over the Wailing Wall. But the Wailing Wall is not the West Bank and Gaza. You have 3.2 million Palestinians who are living under Israeli military occupation against their will. Today, F-16 and Apache helicopters were destroying Palestinian homes.

MATTHEWS: Mr.--Mr. Ambassador...

Mr. RAHMAN: A family of Palestinians...

MATTHEWS: Let--let me--let me try to sharpen this discussion. I am not a mediator. I am simply trying to figure this out.

Mr. Ambassador, there was a proposal floated just the other day--we haven't had a chance to hear your view on this since it's been floated--by Abdullah--the Prince Abdullah who is basically the ruler of Saudi Arabia. He says, just--Israel go back to the '67 borders, pre-'67 war, and allow the I--the Palestinians to become a state, and all the Arab countries in the world are going to recognize Israel's right to exist. What do you make of that formulation?

Mr. PINKAS: Well, seeing is believing, Chris. I have not seen that. I--I've seen Tom Fried--I've read Tom Friedman in The New York Times report that Abdullah wanted to make such a proposal, but decided to leave that speech in his drawer. It would have been better had Saudi Arabia made that speech, or made that statement, or adopted that policy before Camp David, during Camp David or in the aftermath of Camp David. Perhaps a lot of violence could have been avoided.

Now, as for the--the merits of the idea itself, I got to hear it from him.

I--I have to tell you, it--it makes perfect sense on paper. I need to see this from not just Saudi Arabia, but...

MATTHEWS: OK. You--you--you're...

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Mr. PINKAS: And--and--and--and let me just--let me just add one sentence, Chris.

MATTHEWS: All right.

Mr. PINKAS: You cannot take what Abdullah said to Tom Friedman of The New York Times out of the context of Saudi Arabia getting some rotten public relations in the United States.

MATTHEWS: So you think it was a PR move?

Mr. PINKAS: I think it was largely a PR move.

MATTHEWS: Mr. Rahman, would you accept the deal that--that Prince Abdullah mentioned? Would you...

Mr. RAHMAN: Of course. I just offered it to Mr. Pinkas, and he did not make any comment on it.

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MATTHEWS: Who would stop the Arab street from not accepting that deal?

Mr. RAHMAN: Well...

MATTHEWS: Because your governments could say yes.

Mr. RAHMAN: My--well, the Arabs...

MATTHEWS: Even Iraq could say yes, but what would stop the bomb-throwers and the killers from going into Israel?

Mr. RAHMAN: You know--you know--you know, the problem of Israel is not with the Arab street. It is with the Palestinian people. Israel is keeping the Palestinian people under occupation. That is the main problem. Once Israel--and that's what Prince Abdullah is telling Israel--get out of the West Bank and Gaza, remove the Jewish settlements that were built there illegally, move out of the Golan and stop colonizing our land...

MATTHEWS: What percentage of the Palestinian people for whom you represent--what percentage of the Palestinian people would insist on a complete retaking of all Palestinian lands including all of the state of Israel? How many would fight for that?

Mr. RAHMAN: Listen--list--listen, Mr. Matthews, today there was a poll for Palestinian public opinion that was published.

MATTHEWS: All right.

Mr. RAHMAN: Seventy-five percent of the Palestinians voted for two-state solution along the 1967 boundaries.

Mr. PINKAS: Nonsense.

Mr. RAHMAN: I want Mr. Pinkas today to tell our viewers...

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MATTHEWS: OK. All right.

Mr. RAHMAN: ...are you willing to accept a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza next to Israel to live in peace or you are not? Don't go around the bush.

MATTHEWS: OK. We're going to be right back. We'll be back with Alon Pinkas and for that result, more coming back on HARDBALL.

You know...

(Announcements)

MATTHEWS: Israeli Consul General Alon Pinkas and PLO spokesman **Hasan Abdel Rahman**.

Mr. Ambassador, what do you make of that idea that 75 percent of the people in a recent poll just said--the Palestinians have said they would accept Israel as a country if--if Israel would accept them as a country?

Mr. PINKAS: That's great. But let me--let me just add two things. One is, 72 percent, in a poll conducted two months ago, also believe in suicide attacks as a legitimate and moral weapon. Number two, those 75 percent don't make decisions. The people who make decisions in the Palestinian camp are Arafat and two or three other people, which brings me to respond what my--my colleague, Mr. Abdel Rahman said before, that Mr. Sharon failed the Israelis.

It's tragically amusing to hear that from someone who's never voted in his life. I mean, I understand that the concept of democracy is alien to the Palestinian people. Perhaps if they experiment with it once, twice, maybe three times, who knows? You may like it, you may find it much more easy to deal with us being democratic.

MATTHEWS: Why do you take polls if you don't have elections, Mr.--Mr. Hasan?

Mr. RAHMAN: I want to answer Mr. Pin...

MATTHEWS: Why do--why do you--why do you hold polls...

Mr. RAHMAN: Let me just...

MATTHEWS: ...take polls if you don't answer--hold elections?

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Mr. RAHMAN: Let just me make one comment...

MATTHEWS: Sure.

Mr. RAHMAN: ...and I'll...

MATTHEWS: All right.

Mr. RAHMAN: First of all, democracies do not occupy other people and deprive them of their very basic right to self-determination and national independence. Democracies do not discriminate against people. You know, South  
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Africa, white regime in South Africa, used to call itself a democracy. But it was a democracy for the whites. Israel is a democracy for the Jews, but not for its citizens. So let's not be misled by what Mr. Pinkas said.

Mr. PINKAS: Citizens are Jews.

Mr. RAHMAN: Polls, yes, we have--we...

MATTHEWS: OK. Mr.--go ahead and respond to that, Mr. Ambassador.

Mr. PINKAS: Look, Syria is a people's democratic republic.

Mr. RAHMAN: Well...

Mr. PINKAS: And--and--and this could go on forever.

Mr. RAHMAN: But they have...(unintelligible).

Mr. PINKAS: Look, I think that every reasonable viewer of this show knows that Israel is a liberal democracy.

MATTHEWS: OK. We--we're going to continue this debate.

Mr. PINKAS: And we--we don't--we...

MATTHEWS: Mr. Ambassador, Alon Pinkas, please come back next time again.

Mr. **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, spokesman for the PLO, please come back.

We'll be right back with what I really think.

Mr. RAHMAN: Thank you.

(Announcements)

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**SHOW:** Hardball with Chris Matthews (9:00 PM ET) - CNBC

**February 14, 2002 Thursday**

**LENGTH:** 444 words

**HEADLINE:** Israel's Alon Pinkas and PLO's **Hasan Abdel Rahman** discuss Shimon Peres' new peace agreement

**ANCHORS:** CHRIS MATTHEWS

**BODY:**

CHRIS MATTHEWS, host:

So here's the deal. After months of quiet consultation with the top Palestinian leaders, Shimon Peres, Israel's foreign minister, has drawn up a new peace plan. It calls for a cease fire, number one, and immediate recognition of an initial Palestinian state on limited turf and a yearlong negotiation over what the final state would look like.

Mr. Ambassador, what are the chances of a trade of a cease fire for recognition?

Mr. ALON PINKAS (Israeli Consul General): I think--I think it's a sound plan. It--it--it's new in the sense that this document has not been introduced before. But it is based on the Tenet Plan, on the Mitchell Plan, on the remnants of the Oslo Agreement, and even on some understanding of...

MATTHEWS: Would your government accept it?

PINKAS: No, it has not been brought--it has not been brought to the



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government for its approval as of now.

MATTHEWS: Has anybody in your government spoken up, besides Shimon Peres, he's been on the show so many times. Has anyone bigger than him, the defense minister, anyone in the Likud parties, anybody say, 'good deal?'

Mr. PINKAS: No, but I have to tell you that--that my own impression, knowing the gentleman in this conversation and in this dialogue, that--that Prime Minister Sharon and Peres are not that far apart in--in their endorsement of such a document as it started. What I'm afraid of, Chris...

MATTHEWS: Well, Rahman I...

Mr. PINKAS: ...is not what the prime minister, but what the Palestinians will do, and...

MATTHEWS: Let me ask--speaking for the Palestinians, Rahman, would you accept  
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a cease fire in exchange for statehood right now?

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, let me say this: We accept a cease fire and we accept statehood, but not the state that Shimon Peres is speaking about, or at least he is alleged to be--to speak about. You can't expect...

MATTHEWS: When you sat with me, you told me a minute ago you wanted the '47 borders back. You want to go back to 1947.

Mr. RAHMAN: No, no, no, no. No, I didn't say '47, I said '67.

MATTHEWS: No, but you said that...

Mr. RAHMAN: No, no, no. I said the 1967.

Mr. PINKAS: That was on the table.

Mr. RAHMAN: 1967, which is the fourth of June, 1967.

MATTHEWS: So divided--divide Jerusalem again.

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, we are--we can have East Jerusalem for the Palestinians, West Jerusalem for Israel and United Jerusalem for both people.

MATTHEWS: OK, thank you. Thank you very much.

Alon, I don't think it's going to sell. Thank you, Alon Pinkas and **Hasan Abdel Rahman** from the Palestinians. I'll be back in a moment with what I really think.

(Announcements)

**LOAD-DATE:** February 15, 2002

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**SHOW:** CNN Daybreak

**February 8, 2002, Friday AM ET**

**NETWORK:** CNN Cable Programming

**MEDIUM:** Cable

**LENGTH:** 115 words

**BODY:**

START: 32.34

Crisis in the Middle East. Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon heads to New York this morning to speak with American Jewish Leaders before returning to Israel.

Mr. Sharon met with

Visual - Pres. Bush at the

Visual - White House and said that he believes a Palestinian State will be created at the end of the peace talks.

Interview - **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Chief Plo Rep. to US, says Israel is responsible for violence in the region.

Interview - Raanan Gissin, Sharon Spokesman, says they didn't choose the war, it

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was imposed on them. In the West Bank overnight Israeli Forces made raids in four separate areas, and arrested three Palestinian activists.

END: 33.49

**SEGMENT-ID:** 20

**PROGRAM-ID:** cnn05000208

**LOAD-DATE:** March 16, 2002

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CNN

**SHOW:** CNN CROSSFIRE 19:30

**February 7, 2002 Thursday**

Transcript # 020700CN.V20

**SECTION:** News; Domestic

**LENGTH:** 3981 words

**HEADLINE:** Conflict in Middle East; Mormon Bashing at Olympics

**GUESTS:** Ranaan Gissin, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Kim Farah, Bernie Ward

**BYLINE:** Robert Novak, Bill Press

**HIGHLIGHT:**

Spokesmen for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and the Palestinians discuss the current conflict in the Middle East. Plus, the media have turned

Mormon-bashing into a sport, taking on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints on all kinds of issues, especially polygamy.

**BODY:**

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

ROBERT NOVAK, CO-HOST: Tonight, his boss and President Bush just met face-to-face. Now the spokesperson for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon faces off with a top Palestinian official. And Mormon bashing. Why has it become the newest sport at the Olympics?

ANNOUNCER: Live from Washington, CROSSFIRE. On the left, Bill Press. On the right, Robert Novak. In the crossfire, spokesperson for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Ranaan Gissin and chief Palestinian representative to the U.S., **Hasan Abdel Rahman**. And later in Salt Lake City, Utah, Mormon spokesperson Kim Farah and in San Francisco, radio talk show host Bernie Ward.

BILL PRESS, CO-HOST: It's CROSSFIRE. Thanks for joining us. Even though he's refused to meet even once with Chairman Arafat, President Bush met with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon just a little while ago for the fourth time in less than a

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CNN CROSSFIRE 19:30 February 7, 2002 Thursday  
year.

But peace in the Middle East remains but a distant dream. In what is now a familiar pattern of violence, a Palestinian gunman killed three people on the West Bank yesterday. And Israeli warplanes retaliated today against a Palestinian Authority building.

At least 833 Palestinians and 252 Israelis killed since the peace process fell apart two years ago. Is there any hope left? Can there be any peace if



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one side refuses to talk with the other -- Bob Novak.

NOVAK: Yes, Mr. Gissin, your prime minister has come to Washington to try to talk the president into breaking off relations with Arafat, the same as you have. I think kind of symbolically the day after your gunships were in action again, firing missiles at Nablus.

Isn't it quite clear that since there's nobody else to talk to, who is interested in peace on the Palestinian side, what you want to do is win the war, wear down the Palestinians with gunships?

RANAAN GISSIN, ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER SHARON SPOKESMAN: We didn't start this war. We didn't choose this war. It was imposed on us. And I think after September 11, there's a clear understanding I think both by the president, as well as the prime minister, but the two people that are above and beyond the common shared values and common interests that we share, we also share unfortunately a same destiny.

Either we fight terrorism for the sake of freedom and liberty in the pursuit of happiness, or we become victims of it. And I think after September 11, the world does not tolerate terrorism of any sort. And I think that's the backdrop against which this meeting takes place. Terrorism was imposed on us 16 months ago by deliberate campaign by Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority.

NOVAK: Mr. Gissin, of course, you have been winning a the war because you're killing a lot more Palestinians, about a 4 to 1 margin than they're killing you...

GISSIN: Not by our choice.

NOVAK: But Yasser Arafat in "The New York Times" on Sunday said some things that some very thoughtful Americans consider very important. Let's put them up on the screen.

He said, "I condemn the attacks carried out by terrorist groups against Israeli civilians. These groups do not represent the Palestinian people or their legitimate aspirations for freedom. They are terrorist organizations, and I am determined to put an end to their activities."

As far as plain English goes, that can't be any stronger, can it?

GISSIN: Yes, but if plain English could bring to life all those innocent people that Arafat's order has brought their death to, then perhaps I would say applaud these words. But words do not bring peace. Arafat made so many declarations and so many commitments to peace. And look where we are today.

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Even after he made that declaration of a cease-fire on December 16, we have suffered 18 dead, 250 wounded.

NOVAK: But he can't control those people.

GISSIN: No, that's not true. He doesn't want to control. I think we have to put a spade where it is.

PRESS: Mr. Rahman, after the meeting today with the prime minister, President Bush and the prime minister met with reporters. And President Bush kind of put it right to Chairman Arafat. I'd like you to listen to what the president said, then get you to respond, please. Here's President Bush just a little while ago.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: I assured the prime minister that we would continue keep pressure on Mr. Arafat to convince him that he must take serious, concrete, real steps to reduce terrorist activities in the Middle East.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

PRESS: That's the president's demand. What's your response? Are you ready to take those steps?

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**HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF PALESTINIAN REP. TO U.S.:** I would say that the president's statement would have been much more relevant had he also asked Mr. Sharon to stop demolishing Palestinian homes, stealing Palestinian land to build exclusive Jewish settlements, to impose a total siege on the Palestinians, starving the Palestinian population, making the Palestinian people life miserable.

And I want to say also to Mr. Gissin that history does not start on the 11 of September. He refuses and Israel refuses to accept that what is happening today between us and Israel is the result of 35 years of Israeli military occupation of our territories and of our people in which our people are denied the very basic rights that every human being takes for granted. History does not start on 11 of September.

And by the way, we are opposed to terrorism, all kinds of terrorism. Not the terrorism only of individuals, but also the terrorism that is carried by the state of Israel against the Palestinians. If you allow me just to continue for one second.

PRESS: I know Mr. Gissin wants to respond here.

RAHMAN: Yes, of course.

PRESS: He's chomping at the bit.

RAHMAN: I am responding to Mr. Gissin also. We want peace. Yasser Arafat did not talk against terrorism only. He laid down a vision for peace in which we accept the right of Israel to exist within the 67 boundaries. I want Mr. Gissin to tell me here tonight that he accepts our right to have a state over 22

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percent of historic Palestine that would live next to Israel. If he says that, tonight he and I can start a peace process.

PRESS: Here it is. Go.

GISSIN: I think you should have heard what the prime minister has said. What lies at the end of the process, he said it today to President Bush.

RAHMAN: What did he say?

GISSIN: He said that there is at the end of the process, when the Palestinian comply with all those demands which are presented, not just by us, but by the United States to stop terrorism, to recognize the birth right of Israel.

There's a difference. History does not start on September 11. It started 4,000 years ago. This is our ancestral homeland. We lived there before. We never stopped living in that land.

RAHMAN: But we have been there for (INAUDIBLE).

GISSIN: And we recognize -- no, no, but we recognize your right.

RAHMAN: We have been living there. And you were not there.

GISSIN: No, but we were there.

RAHMAN: Well, if you want to go back 4,000 years, we cannot go -- we cannot have a serious debate here tonight.

GISSIN: Hasan, we weren't there the same way as Temple Mount wasn't there.

RAHMAN: No, but let me tell you, no, no, no.

GISSIN: They said that Temple Mount wasn't there, too.

RAHMAN: What I am saying that 4,000 years ago does not give you the legitimacy to destroy the people who are living on the land today.

GISSIN: But we offered a hand to peace. Every time we offer a hand to peace.

RAHMAN: I am offering you a hand tonight.

GISSIN: No.

RAHMAN: The '67 borders, do you accept it?

PRESS: If I can, the question I heard was you've both been there for 4,000 years. The question I heard was do you accept the existence of an independent

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Palestinian state, as he described, right along side of Israel, yes or no?

GISSIN: As we said, at the end of the process, yes, but this date, we will not accept an irredentist terrorist entity on our border. We will accept a peaceful one.

RAHMAN: You want to tell the Palestinian people that you won't have them  
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under your occupation forever?

GISSIN: No, there's no occupation.

RAHMAN: There...

GISSIN: Ninety-five percent of the population is under Arafat's occupation.

RAHMAN: Is there any people that you know of this in the world who is under foreign military occupation, who remain silent?

GISSIN: But this is a lie. This whole hoax about occupation that you're talking about.

RAHMAN: You are not occupying us?

GISSIN: No, because 95 percent of your population...

(CROSSTALK)

NOVAK: Mr. Gissin, I wanted to ask you about Prime Minister Sharon's motives. I thought that was an interesting paragraph in that "New York Times" piece by Mr. Arafat. And we'll look at this, too.

He said, "Many believe that Ariel Sharon, Israel's prime minister, given his opposition to every peace treaty Israel has ever signed, is fanning the flames of unrest in an effort to delay indefinitely a return to negotiations.

Regrettably, he has done little to prove them wrong."

You know, there are a lot of Americans, some Jewish; many, many not Jewish who think -- who are very hard-liners. They think these negotiations were wrong. General Sharon is their hero. This is -- he does not like the peace process. Isn't that a fact?

GISSIN: That's not true. That's not true, because let the historical record speak for itself. Who was it who led to in building the peace with Egypt? Ariel Sharon, in the relation with President Sadat. Who was instrumental in building the peace with Jordan? Ariel Sharon. Who has found the special relation with King Hussein? Ariel Sharon. Who was the architect of the Y agreement? He wasn't a prime minister, but he was foreign minister. It was Ariel Sharon.

So when you look at the way -- what he has done in war, as well as in peace, he is an accomplisher. He's a doer. And maybe he wasn't the one that the laurels of peace were tied to...

NOVAK: He gets the Oslo Agreement.

GISSIN: What? Yes for good reason.

PRESS: Mr. Rahman, I'm no great big fan of Ariel Sharon. I have doubts about his commitment to the peace process as well, but last week, he did meet with three other Palestinian leaders, not Chairman Arafat, which seems to indicate he's not maybe the hard-liner we think he is. He's willing to talk peace with  
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people who can deliver. And he has no confidence in Yasser Arafat.

RAHMAN: Unfortunately, Mr. Sharon used this meeting as a public relations ploy for himself. Because after he left, although he told them please thank Chairman Arafat, he told the press yesterday that he met them in order to develop an alternative leadership to Yasser Arafat.

That's not the way to build confidence. You know, believe me, we want peace with Israel, but you have to listen to the 110 Israeli reservists who refuse to

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serve in the Palestinian territories because they said we do not want to be party to the destruction of the Palestinian people.

NOVAK: And a newspaper poll shows two to one feeling by the Israeli people that Prime Minister Sharon has no plan for peace. Do you want to -- we're almost out of time. We are out of time, but you want to respond to that?

GISSIN: Well, again, let him prove, let him do what he knows how to do and he will make peace. Even Palestinians admit, they don't admit it publicly, that is the one person, Palestinian and other Arab leaders, with which the Middle East can move towards peace is with Ariel Sharon, because he's a man of his word.

NOVAK: We're out of time.

GISSIN: Now forget for a minute the demonizing effect, you know.

NOVAK: Mr. Gissin, thank you very much.

GISSIN: Thank you.

NOVAK: Mr. Rahman, thank you. We'll be back with religious warfare at the Salt Lake City Olympics. Are they bashing the Mormons or just having a little fun with the people of Utah?

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

NOVAK: Welcome back to CROSSFIRE. Who will be the fiercest competitors at the Olympics this year? The U.S.A. versus Russia? China versus Japan? Would you believe it's the media versus the Mormons?

The media have turned Mormon-bashing into a sport, taking on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints on all kinds of issues, especially polygamy. Even the church's missionary work is not sacred, as seen this past weekend on "Saturday Night Live."

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP, "SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE")

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Welcome to Utah.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Huh?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Have you been to Salt Lake City before?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: No, but I can't talk now.

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Do you know about the Church of Latter Day Saints?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

NOVAK: Has the media gone too far? Are the Olympics a golden opportunity for the Mormons to turn around their image? Our guests in San Francisco, radio talk show host Bernie Ward, and in Salt Lake City, Mormon spokeswoman, Kim Farah -- Bill.

KIM FARAH, MORMON SPOKESPERSON: Kim Farah.

PRESS: Kim Farah, welcome.

You know, it's not just outsiders like "Saturday Night Live" that are making fun of Utah and the Mormons these days. Even inside of Utah, there's a lot of poking going on. There's a beer on the market that's called "Polygamy Porter."

FARAH: Polygamy Porter, yes.

PRESS: And the theme for that beer is "why have just one? Take some home for the wives." And there's a ski resort nearby that's also -- it's got a quad share. There are four seats on quad share. And it's advertised as seats for wife, wife, wife and husband. My question to you, Kim, is do you still have a sense of humor? The games haven't even started yet.

FARAH: We have a great sense of humor. In fact, I think we will probably found the "Saturday Night Live" skit just as humorous as anyone else. You know, when the Olympic scrutiny and the spotlight is on the city that's going to host the game, you expected people to take a look at your culture and things that may be unique or quirky. We've heard a lot of green jello jokes and things like that. And it's all good natured fun. And we don't take any offense to it.

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PRESS: Well, I remember reading earlier accounts about the games coming up in Salt Lake City that the Mormon church actually saw this as a great opportunity to convert a lot of people and to prosthetize. I mean, are you really assigning like a missionary to every athlete or a missionary to every tourist that gets off a plane in Salt Lake City?

FARAH: Absolutely not. In fact, I've actually seen some reports where it says we've pulled missionaries from the streets. And if you've ever visited Salt Lake City, we don't have missionaries on the streets, handing out pamphlets.

We are a prosthetizing faith. We're known for that. That's why we found the skit so humorous. But during the games, we know people are coming to see the sport. There will not be missionaries out at Olympic venues.

However, having said that, this is an opportunity for the church to education. There are a lot of misconceptions out there. In the last couple of weeks, there have been over 900 journalists who have come to the church, especially from international areas to say, hey what do you believe? Can you clarify this for us? And for us, that's a good opportunity. That's a good thing.

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NOVAK: Bernie Ward, every religion as you know, has beliefs, which in the eyes of outsiders may seem ridiculous. But can you imagine if this Olympics or summer Olympics were in Israel, that anybody would dare to make fun of Moses as a prophet of the Jewish religion, as Joseph Smith was ridiculed by the Mormon religion? Isn't the fact that the anti-religious journalists, the secular journalists, are attacking the Mormons because they can get away with it?

BERNIE WARD, RADIO TALK SHOW HOST: Oh maybe a little bit. I think that you're absolutely correct. I don't think you could do "Saturday Night Live" skits about Israel. But imagine if the Olympics were in the Vatican. This is a Catholic church, had three Broadway shows going on at the same time, all of them poking fun at the church one way or the other. And you do need to develop a thick skin and simply take it as it goes along.

I mean let's face it, the Olympics is going to a company town. This is a state where 90 percent or so of the people are Mormon. There are going to be more minorities in the state in 17 days than there may have been in the last 17 months.

This is going to be a focus that the Mormons are going to have to take, the focus that goes along with it. And there are going to be some serious questions asked about the church, about its relationships with its history. And some of that's going to come out that maybe some people didn't know about before. And it may be a little bit uncomfortable. But in the long run, it's all about information and it's all about knowing what's going on. So why not?

NOVAK: Let me follow that up, Bernie.

FARAH: Bernie?

NOVAK: Go ahead, Kim.

FARAH: Actually, I think Bernie's brought up a very important point. But I want to clarify that in Salt Lake City itself, we actually only make up 49 percent of the population. And so we've heard a lot about the Mormon games and that label.

We're sensitive to that label. We think it's a label that's purely been manufactured by the media. And quite frankly, if I was someone of another faith or organization in the city, I would find it insulting.

So the church has gone to great lengths to work with an Alliance for Unity, a committee made up of various organizations in this city to make sure that ethnic



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groups in this city and other religious faiths have this opportunity to shine as well along with the church.

NOVAK: Bernie -- go ahead.

WARD: Well, I was going say, let's understand the other side of this. The Mormon church inserted itself into California to support an initiative that was anti-gay marriage and spent a lot of money here in a high profile way. The Mormon church with its representatives, Orrin Hatch and others, have been very clear over the years about entering the political fray.

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So if you're going to play out in the political fray, you're going to have to expect what comes back with you (INAUDIBLE) not going to be flattering.

FARAH: Well, Bernie, Bernie, absolutely Bernie. But you have to understand that the church was neutral during the Olympic bid. In fact, we had some in our leadership for and against. We were neutral. But once the Olympics were awarded to Salt Lake City, we wanted to be good hosts And we consider ourselves really Utahans first and Mormons second in the context of the Olympic Games.

NOVAK: Bernie, let me suggest what may be going on here. Everybody knows that sports writers are hard drinkers. And you go Utah and all you can get is 3.2 beer. Isn't this a protest on temperance -- against temperance?

WARD: Well, I don't know if it's a protest on temperance. I think what it is is, there are people who don't know a lot about the Mormon church. And there are a lot of people, a lot of groups in this country who have some bones to pick with the Mormons. And I think you're going to see some stories about that.

PRESS: OK, all right Kim -- Kim, if I may, Kim. We're almost out of time. I just got to ask you, you know, there's sort of a motto out there that the world is welcome here into Salt Lake City. But let's face it, this is a state that -- where there's no alcohol, no caffeine and no tobacco. I mean, this is a weird state, right? You've got to admit. You are different.

FARAH: No, it's not. No. I think that we're different in a good way. We're one of 19 states that regulates our alcohol in such a way. And I think people, when they come to Salt Lake City, will see that we're pretty much just like everyone else.

WARD: Well, watch out for the green jello.

FARAH: Yes, well, it's come to Salt Lake City and I'll feed you some.

PRESS: No, you're not like everybody else. You're not like everybody else if, again, the creed is no tobacco, no caffeine and no alcohol. In other words, you welcome people as long as they abstain while they're at the Games, right?

FARAH: Oh, no. In fact, we have put our volunteers through an extensive, if you will, sensitivity training because we realize that we're in a community with a lot of people that believe as we do. We've actually told people, what are you going to do when people come and ask where to get a drink? And we tell them where to go. The Dead Goat Saloon is a great place to go.

PRESS: Well, on that good bit of news that you can get a drink at the Olympics, we are out of time.

FARAH: You can.

PRESS: Kim Farah, thank you for joining us. Bernie Ward, good to have you back on CROSSFIRE. Thank you both.

WARD: Thank you, Bill.

PRESS: And when CROSSFIRE continues, our own version of headline news.

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Stories that never made the front page or the back page, but we still like them and you will too. Stay tuned for our non-news news alert.

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(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

NOVAK: Now CROSSFIRE news alert, bringing you fascinating little stories you might have missed. All over Washington last week, people received an unusual e-mail from writer Danielle Crittenden. She revealed her husband, speechwriter and former journalist David Frome (ph), was the author of President Bush's phrase "axis of evil."

She was breaking a White House code of silence. But Danielle added I hope you indulge my wifely pride in seeing this one repeated in headlines everywhere. David hopes the president will indulge it as well.

PRESS: And who says Hillary Clinton has no sense of humor? Speaking at the Washington Press Club dinner this week, she regretted that the Bush White House couldn't seem to locate the records of Dick Cheney's energy task force. Advice from the former First Lady, "I suggest that they try the upstairs closet."

NOVAK: And Democratic Representative Judy Corshane of the New Hampshire legislature has a perfect voting record that offends nobody. Elected in 1998 and re-elected in 2000, she never has voted in any of 444 House roll calls during her two terms, not a one. She says she's not been well, but well enough to pick up a special House license plate and paychecks. Maybe her constituents will send her back for a do nothing third term that doesn't offend anybody.

PRESS: And are you ready for this? New York City's broke. Again? Yes. And new Mayor Michael Bloomberg has put the city up for sale. No kidding. In return for big contributions, he is giving corporations the right to plant their name on city parks and playgrounds. Our advice? Hurry up and visit the Big Apple. It may be your last chance to see Central Park before they rename it Park Enron. Bob?

NOVAK: Bill, I guess -- I presume you approve of Senator Clinton's, Senator Hillary Clinton's making joke out of her duplicity when she defied the federal prosecutors and hid the documents they were looking for?

PRESS: Bob, will you ever give up on Hillary?

NOVAK: No.

PRESS: She's got a sense of humor. It's self deprecating humor. It's good sport, Bob.

NOVAK: Well, Joe Stalin had a sense of humor, too.

PRESS: And she's going to be the first woman president of the United States. You got to deal with it, Bob

NOVAK: Joe Stalin had a sense of humor, too. Did you know that?

PRESS: From the left, I'm Bill Press. Good night for CROSSFIRE.

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NOVAK: From the right, I'm Robert Novak. Join us again next time for another edition of CROSSFIRE. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT [www.fdc.com](http://www.fdc.com)

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SHOW: CNN WOLF BLITZER REPORTS 19:00

February 7, 2002 Thursday

Transcript # 020700CN.V67

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HEADLINE: Trouble on United Airlines Flight; Former Enron CEO Testifies Before Congress

GUESTS: Kenneth Roth, Dore Gold, Hassan Abdel Rahman, Steve Forbes

BYLINE: Wolf Blitzer, Mark Potter, Jamie McIntyre, Wesley Clark, Kelly Wallace, Kate Snow, Mike Hanna, Lou Dobbs

HIGHLIGHT:

A passenger tried to force his way into the cockpit of a United Airlines flight earlier today. Plus, former Enron CEO Jeffrey Skilling testified today before Congress.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

WOLF BLITZER, CNN ANCHOR: Now on WOLF BLITZER REPORTS: trouble in the cockpit on a flight from Miami to Argentina.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We all jumped on top of him. Several of the crew members and three passengers, we were restraining him.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: Flight attendants get ready for the next time.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: This story of financial collapse and betrayal is of epic proportions. It is almost Biblical in scope.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

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BLITZER: Congress vows to get to the bottom of the Enron scandal, but that may not be easy.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: On the advice of my counsel, I respectfully decline to answer the question.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: I'll question business executive and former presidential candidate, Steve Forbes.

A U.S. predator drone stalks and strikes an al Qaeda convoy. What are the odds that the missile attack killed Osama bin Laden?

Hello, I'm Wolf Blitzer in Washington. We'll continue to monitor the hearing involving the Enron investigation on Capitol Hill. But first, let's check some other news. And we did hear some very disturbing words once again today -- words that brought back some horrible memories. And that tops our "News Alert."

A passenger tries to force his way into the cockpit of a United Airlines flight. This one was headed to Buenos Aires, Argentina, from Miami. From all accounts, the co-pilot was the hero, subduing the man with an ax. Upon landing in Buenos Aires, the man was taken into custody. We'll have much more on this in just a moment.

A shift in policy for the Bush administration. Today the president announced the Geneva Conventions would apply to certain Afghan war detainees, those who are determined to be Taliban fighters. Mr. Bush says the new rights would not apply to al Qaeda fighters.

A demand from the White House for the "unconditional and immediate release" of Daniel Pearl. There's still no sign of "The Wall Street Journal" reporter, kidnapped last month in Pakistan. Karachi police say the investigation has slowed down, adding they haven't heard from Pearl's captors in more than a week.

We're awaiting the arrival of the Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon at the White House. He and President Bush are scheduled to meet this hour about the tattered peace process in the Middle East. More coming on that as well.

And now back to our top story, the passenger who tried to storm the cockpit. It happened on a United Airlines flight from Miami to Buenos Aires, Argentina, this morning. CNN's Mark Potter is following the story and he joins us from Miami -- Mark.

MARK POTTER, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Hello, Wolf. Plans are under way now to bring 28-year-old Pablo Moreira back to Miami overnight, to face federal charges that may include the charge of interfering with a flight crew. He's scheduled to have his initial appearance in a magistrate court in downtown Miami tomorrow.

He still is in custody at this hour in Buenos Aires. We're told that he will be accompanied back to Miami by FBI agents. He is described as a bank employee from Uruguay. According to the FBI, this is what happened. Flight 855 left Miami around midnight, heading for Buenos Aires. One-hundred fifty-seven people were on board that flight, including three pilots and about 12 flight attendants.

At about 5:30 in the morning, Eastern time, he allegedly got out of his seat and began kicking the cockpit door, karate style. He kicked out the bottom panel of the door and began to crawl into the cockpit. He then was confronted by a co-pilot, who hit him in the head with an ax. Passenger John Boyer said he actually spoke with the man.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOHN BOYER, PASSENGER: I asked him what he was doing and he said he wanted to talk to the captain. And before I knew it, he had inserted himself into the cockpit through the lower part of the door, which was, you know, had been kicked in by him. So we all jumped on top of him. Several of the crew members and passengers, actually, three of us. And we were restraining him.

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We didn't see what was going on, but found out later what was going on on the other side of the cockpit door, which was basically the actions of the co-pilot with the ax.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

POTTER: Now, Moreira was restrained for the rest of the flight. He was injured in the scuffle, and he was treated on the ground in Buenos Aires by a doctor who had described him as stable and lucid. Now, the FBI says it doesn't know why this happened. Agents did not find a weapon. United Airlines, meanwhile, is crediting a recently reinforced cockpit door and a fast-acting crew with preventing him from actually getting further inside that cockpit -- Wolf.

BLITZER: Mark, do we know anything else about this passenger? Oftentimes, some of these incidents, not a series of this occurs, there's a suggestion a passenger may have been drunk. Is there any indication of that?

POTTER: There has been a discussion about whether he was drunk. Some people said he appeared to be. Other indications are that he is not. The FBI spokesman here earlier in the day said that its agents had no indication of that. That's still being worked out. Right now nobody seems to know what the man wanted to do, except that he was intent on getting inside that cockpit, and he didn't do it. At least not very far.

BLITZER: Mark Potter in Miami. Presumably we'll know a lot more very soon. And of course, we'll be on top of this story as it unfolds. Thank you very much for that report.

The Baltimore-Washington International Airport got a scare of its own today, but it proved to be a false alarm. At least 1,500 passengers were evacuated from one concourse after a faulty piece of equipment triggered a security breach alarm. FAA officials reopened the concourse two hours later. All passengers were rescreened before being allowed to board.

And now to the war in Afghanistan in the eastern part of that country. U.S. forces are trying to confirm the identities of suspected al Qaeda members killed in a hellfire missile attack. It's believed the attack killed a prominent al Qaeda leader. And on Capitol Hill today, the man in charge of the war delivered a progress report to a Senate committee. For details, we turn to our CNN military affairs correspondent, Jamie McIntyre. He's over at the Pentagon -- Jaime.

JAMIE MCINTYRE, CNN MILITARY AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT: Well, Wolf, bad weather in southeastern Afghanistan continues to prevent the United States from getting special operations troops on the ground at the site of that hellfire missile attack, fired from a CIA drone, at a group of people believed to include a prominent al Qaeda leader.

Now, U.S. intelligence says that they believe that this was a prominent person because it was a group of three people that were fired on from this unmanned drone, that appeared to be surrounded with a lot of security, and also given great prominence, great deference, to one of the people who seemed to be quite tall. Now, we know Osama bin Laden is tall as well, but there are other al Qaeda leaders who are also tall. At this point the U.S. says it has no confirmation of the identities of the three people it believes were killed in the missile attack.

As far the progress of the war itself, General Tommy Franks, the U.S. central commander, told members of Congress today that he would agree with their assessment that there's still a long way to go. In fact, he said we're only about halfway there in achieving the goals he set out to do.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GENERAL TOM FRANKS, U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND COMMANDER: What remains to be done? Analysis of every piece of intelligence information, with respect to where we may find potential weapons of mass destruction sites, where we have reason to believe that there may have been pursuit of such weapons. Senator, we have to go there with military forces, to investigate these places, to gain intelligence information, to gain insight into the construct of the al Qaeda network.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

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MCINTYRE: Now, in a separate hearing before the Senate intelligence committee, the head of intelligence for the Pentagon, the head of the DIA, Vice Admiral Thomas Wilson, told members of the committee that he believes that at least six of the top al Qaeda leaders are dead, and two more have been captured. More than a dozen are still at large. He also delivered his assessment that if Osama bin Laden were to be killed, that al Qaeda would fracture, and result in different factions headed by different people with different interests -- Wolf.

BLITZER: Jamie, tell our viewers what General Franks said about the whereabouts, as far as he knew, of Osama bin Laden and of the former Taliban leader, Mullah Mohammed Omar.

MCINTYRE: Well, interestingly, Franks didn't utter the name of bin Laden or Mullah Omar, although it did come up in some questioning. The U.S. position is they still don't know where bin Laden is. Obviously, they're still trying to find out if this strike could have possibly been bin Laden. They have a pretty good idea, they think, of where Mullah Omar is. They think he's in Afghanistan. They think they know the general area where he is, but not enough information to move against him yet.

BLITZER: OK, Jamie McIntyre at the Pentagon, thank you very much. And CNN military analyst, the retired General Wesley Clark, joins me now to talk about the ongoing search for Osama bin Laden and other al Qaeda and Taliban leaders.

General Clark, thanks for joining us. What do you make of this hellfire attack, this predator hellfire against this convoy that may or may not have had al Qaeda leaders on it?

GEN. WESLEY CLARK (RET), FMR. NATO SUPREME COMMANDER: Well, you can hope it was successful and that there really were al Qaeda people there. The odds are about 50-50. We know we had some mistakes in the past where we've hit the wrong people, but hopefully we've been watching this group. Maybe we confirmed the visual sightings with signals or intelligence, or some other reasons to believe they're not just another group of warlords around there. And we struck them, so we have to hope for the best on this.

BLITZER: This is the first time that -- we believe, the CIA has been using this predator drone, this unmanned aircraft with a hellfire laser-guided missile onboard. I don't think it has been used before in earlier military operations. Tell us a little about this.

CLARK: Well, the predator was put in place in the Kosovo campaign. But at that time, it wasn't armed. It does have optics on it. It's got real-time television linkage all over the world. So you've got a lot of people watching whatever is out there in the field. It's very precise in what it looks at. It knows exactly where it is. This one has a laser beam that it can designate a point at which the missile will impact.

BLITZER: Why is the CIA operating these drones with the hellfire missiles, as opposed to the U.S. military?

CLARK: Well, I bet you there's a lot of people inside the Pentagon who have asked that, too. But I think the answer for this is this was a program that was at first to be concealed, covert, not something with the U.S. flag on it. Didn't want a large U.S. military footprint to host the predator there in Pakistan or someplace.

So it was a normal thing before the campaign got under way, to give it to the CIA. And they also had the authority to strike, which may not have been given to the military at that point. Now they've still to the asset, and they're using it.

BLITZER: You mean to say the CIA can do certain things in this kind of military confrontation that the regular rank-and-file of the U.S. military can't do?

CLARK: I think that's exactly right. Now, especially at the outset, they could do things before the main operation got under way. They could have had a presidential order, called a finding, that would have enabled them to strike and use lethal force in executing a mission, before the United States armed forces would be committed.

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BLITZER: You were once the NATO supreme commander and the European commander as well. Does General Tommy Franks command that CIA operation in Afghanistan?

CLARK: Well, he certainly has the responsibility to coordinate it, to know everything there is about it, and to (UNINTELLIGIBLE) issues. But that operation, to the best of my knowledge, is probably being run out of a local command center that's reporting back to CIA headquarters.

BLITZER: That must be frustrating to the military as well.

CLARK: I think there are always frustrations about command and control in operations like this. But we haven't seen the evidence of any significant problems. It's just the kind of frustration you have to live with in a big organization.

BLITZER: Turf war?

CLARK: Yeah.

BLITZER: Thank you very much, General Clark. Appreciate it very much.

Our Web question of the day: will the U.S. ever capture or kill Osama bin Laden? You can vote your answer at [cnn.com/wolf](http://cnn.com/wolf), a very unscientific poll, but still interesting.

President Bush has determined the Geneva Conventions do apply to Taliban fighters, but not to al Qaeda members being detained from the war in Afghanistan. But the treatment of neither group will change. To find out what this means, we turn to our White House correspondent, Kelly Wallace. You attended a briefing today with Ari Fleischer. You heard the explanation. Tell our viewers what this is going to mean, this latest change in the administration policy.

KELLY WALLACE, CNN WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT: Well, Wolf, it's been a complicated afternoon here at the White House trying to sort all of this out. A senior administration official I just spoke with said this is an important distinction that really won't have any practical difference. Just as you said, treatment of the detainees will not change. They still will not be classified as prisoners of war, so they won't be afforded the rights that POWs should get.

But clearly, the president has decided that the Geneva Conventions should apply to Taliban soldiers. The thinking is that even though the United States did not recognize the Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan, the fact that Afghanistan is a signatory to the Geneva Convention, the administration decided it should apply in the case of the Taliban soldiers.

But Ari Fleischer, the president's spokesman, explained that Mr. Bush has decided the Geneva Conventions should not be applied in the case of the al Qaeda operatives, and here's why.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ARI FLEISCHER, WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY: Al Qaeda is an international terrorist group, and cannot be considered a state party to the Geneva Convention. Its members therefore are not covered by the Geneva Convention, and are not entitled to POW status under the treaty.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WALLACE: And in fact this afternoon, we did see another planeload of detainees arriving at the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Some 30 detainees arriving today, putting the total in Cuba at 186 al Qaeda and Taliban fighters. Now, Wolf, you might ask, so if there's no real distinction here -- distinction, but no real difference, why is the administration doing it? Senior administration officials say, one, this will protect American soldiers overseas. The president sending a message, should any American soldiers be captured overseas, if that country is a signatory to the Geneva Conventions, then clearly the Geneva Conventions should apply.

Also, though, U.S. officials say they're not responding to criticism. But, Wolf, you know some human rights groups, also some U.S. allies, have been criticizing the administration for its handling of the detainees. So, in some ways, the administration answering that criticism today as well -- Wolf.



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BLITZER: Kelly Wallace at the White House, thanks for that explanation. As you point out, human rights groups, including Human Rights Watch, is keeping a very close eye on this entire situation involving those detainees. Joining us from New York to talk about President Bush's decision is Kenneth Roth. He's the executive director of Human Rights Watch.

Mr. Roth, thanks once again for joining us. What do you make of this decision by the White House today? It seems to be support of what Secretary of State Colin Powell was pressing for.

KENNETH ROTH, HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH: That's correct. I think that the White House was legitimately worried that its refusal to apply the Geneva Conventions was going to be endangering U.S. service members overseas who might be captured by enemy forces.

The problem is it really didn't go far enough. What the White House in essence said, is we'll apply the Geneva Conventions part way. That is to say that in a formal sense, we're willing to apply the Conventions to the Taliban. But the Geneva Conventions clearly also apply to the al Qaeda forces who were captured in the course of our conflict in Afghanistan.

Second, the administration is just wrong in saying that the Taliban members are not POWs. The Geneva Convention would clearly treat them as prisoners of war, although not the al Qaeda members.

BLITZER: But now that the Taliban members are going to be treated consistent with the Geneva Conventions, doesn't that, for all practical purposes, even if they're not called POWs, mean the same thing?

ROTH: No, unfortunately it doesn't. The big difference for the Taliban members, and the reason they should be treated as POWs, is the Geneva Conventions are clear that anybody who is a member of a regular armed force of a government that has ratified the Geneva Conventions is automatically a prisoner of war, whether or not that government is recognized.

The difference that this makes is that if you're a POW, you have to be treated the exact same way that the detaining power would treat its own soldiers if charged with comparable crimes. That means a formal court marshal, not President Bush's military commission. So that's the big difference that is not addressed by the White House's order today.

BLITZER: But as you know, as far as the al Qaeda fighters are concerned, they were not members of any regular military, they did not serve any state military, they were not wearing uniforms. And as a result, the Bush administration maintains, they shouldn't be accorded any special treatments whatsoever, except humane treatment, which they say they are receiving at the U.S. Naval base at Guantanamo Bay.

ROTH: Correct. The Bush administration is correct that the al Qaeda members would probably not be found to be prisoners of war, largely because they didn't generally respect the rules of war. But it's wrong in saying that the Geneva Conventions don't apply to them. The Conventions, by their terms, clearly apply to any combatant who is captured in the course of an international armed conflict. Afghanistan clearly fits that bill. So the Geneva Convention should apply to both the Taliban and the al Qaeda factions who are captured, even though probably only the Taliban in the end would be found to be POWs, and the al Qaeda members probably not.

BLITZER: All right. Kenneth Roth of Human Rights Watch in New York, thanks very much for joining us.

And I want to go back to the House committee looking into the entire Enron situation. Jeff Skilling, former CEO, is testifying. He's talking about the suicide of his good friend, Clifford Baxter, a former high-ranking official at Enron.

(JOINED IN PROGRESS)

JEFF SKILLING, FORMER CEO, FORMER PRESIDENT, ENRON: And then he turns around and walked back inside his house and closes the door. And Cliff said, you know, from that day forward, your life has changed. And he said they're calling us child molesters. He says that will never wash off.

REP. CLIFF STEARNS (R), FLORIDA: Mr. Skilling, you don't believe that?

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SKILLING: I don't believe what?

STEARNS: You don't believe that the press and everybody calling Cliff Baxter or yourself or anybody on the board of the directors, denigrating or tainting you, you don't think it's accurate. That's what you're saying here today. That you're standing up here saying everything the press is saying, everything that Sherron Watkins is saying, all the testimony you've we've had before you, including the law school, the University of Texas -- all of that is wrong, is what you're saying to us today?

SKILLING: I will not say that. I've read every press account I can read over the last four months, for the specific meetings or representations that the press has made that I was intimately familiar with, where I was there, I'd say the press is getting it right maybe 1/3 of the time. And the other 2/3 of the time, they are just totally, totally off base.

STEARNS: And the special committee report that the board of directors, that the dean of the law school at the University of Texas, is off-base, in your opinion?

SKILLING: I can only comment on what I know. To the extent that that report in any way says I did something that was not in the interest of the shareholders of Enron corporation, then, yes, I disagree with those passages in the report, vehemently. I do not believe -- I did not do anything that was not in the interest, in all the time that I worked for the Enron corporation, that was in the interest of the shareholders of the company.

STEARNS: Mr. Skilling, I'm not an attorney, but you're practicing plausible deniability, which is a term you're using to deny all -- what people have said. Sherron Watkins said Cliff Baxter complained mightily to you, and all who would listen, about the inappropriateness of these transactions with LJM. Jeff McMahon did the same thing.

(CROSSTALK)

STEARNS: Three people who have said that you were told specifically all about these transactions, the conflict of interest. In fact, Jeff McMahon laid out five steps to you on how he thought it should be corrected, because of all the conflict of interest, inherent conflict of interest. So you're asking me to...

SKILLING: Congressman, you are flat out misreading...

STEARNS: I'm reading right from Sherron Watkins' letter. "Cliff Baxter complained mightily to Skilling and all who would listen about the inappropriateness of these transactions." Are you saying Sherron Watkins is not telling the truth? Are you telling me that today? Just yes or no. Is Sherron Watkins telling the truth?

(CROSSTALK)

SKILLING: Can you give me time to specifically go through -- this is serious stuff, sir.

STEARNS: IT's serious stuff.

SKILLING: It's very serious stuff.

(CROSSTALK)

STEARNS: ... whether Sherron Watkins' letter is truthful or not.

SKILLING: The discussion I had with you about what Cliff Baxter said to me related to time, subsequent to me leaving the company, did Cliff Baxter raise an issue about LJM? Cliff Baxter raised an issue with me probably in January or February of last year. To my best recollection, cliff said I don't know anything about the transaction because he would have no basis for knowing about the transaction.

But he said he and Andy were not -- they had a very strained personal relationship. And he says I don't think you ought to be doing anything for Andy Fastow. That was the sum total of our discussion about it. And then Cliff, I think, subsequent to that was open with people that he did not particularly like, any investment vehicle that Andy would have a personal interest in.

STEARNS: So Sherron Watkins, what she's saying here is not truthful?

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SKILLING: If Sherron Watkins says that Cliff complained mightily, as I think she said, to anyone who listened, I would say that is probably true. If you are asking when Cliff Baxter and I discussed the situation, I have a very clear recollection that Cliff said -- in fact, I even asked him. It was my recollection, I asked him, do you think there's anything wrong with the structure in place?

And his answer to me was, I don't know what the structure in place is. I said, do you have any reason to think that there's anything bad going on? He no, I think it looks bad to have a related party transaction, period. And that was the last discussion that we had about it.

STEARNS: Mr. Skilling, I'm going to give you the last word. My time has expired.

BLITZER: An exchange between Jeff Skilling, the former CEO of Enron, and Congressman Cliff Stearns, a Republican from Florida, involving the suicide of Clifford Baxter, a former high-ranking official at Enron. Jeff Skilling, once again insisting he did no wrong, had no knowledge of any wrongdoing while he was CEO.

We're going to continue monitoring this coverage. We'll be back with more of the hearing from the House of Representatives, right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back. On Capitol Hill, a former Enron executive is taking the hot seat while others take the fifth. Lawmakers are trying to untangle the complex web of partnerships that led to the company's financial meltdown.

Our congressional correspondent Kate Snow is keeping track of everything that is going on. And she is joining us now live.

Kate, we just heard an interesting exchange between Jeff Skilling, the former CEO, and Congressman Stearns of Florida, talking about the suicide of Cliff Baxter, a former high-ranking official at Enron.

Give us the context, what all this means.

KATE SNOW, CNN CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Yes.

And we picked that up sort of halfway through. So let me, for those who were watching -- they were talking, Mr. Skilling and Mr. Baxter were best friends. And he said to Mr. Skilling -- the Congressman asked, "What did Cliff Baxter say to you?" because there's been a lot of speculation about what Cliff Baxter said to his friends and colleagues before committing suicide and taking his life just a couple of weeks ago.

And the answer from Mr. Skilling was that he had business concerns about Enron, that he wouldn't detail what those business concerns were. But he offered up an analogy. And he said: "Look, Cliff Baxter came over -- came to me and was talking to me just before he took his life. And he said, 'Jeff, it's like having a neighbor come over to your house, and you are playing outside in your yard, and your neighbor comes over and starts screaming out to the world, 'This man is a child molester.'"

And he said: "He said to me, 'Jeff, they are calling us child molesters.'" So that was the analogy that he used to explain what Cliff Baxter had said to him before taking his life.

This former Enron CEO, Jeffrey Skilling, covering a lot of ground with lawmakers here -- he is the highest-ranking Enron official to testify before Congress thus far. And he has clearly had a message, Wolf, that he wanted to deliver. He wanted to say: Look, when it comes to the outside partnerships that Enron had with these funny names, like Chewco, LJM, JEDI, he thought there were adequate controls in place to be sure there were no conflicts of interests.

He also said he had no knowledge that those partnerships would be used to conceal Enron losses. And he said, when he left the company last summer, he thought the company and the economics were in good shape.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

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REP. JAMES GREENWOOD (R), PENNSYLVANIA: Mr. Skilling a massive earthquake struck Enron right after your departure. And people in far inferior positions to you could see cracks in the walls, feel the tremors, feel the windows rattling and you want us to believe that you sat there in your office and had no clue that this place was about to collapse.

JEFF SKILLING, FORMER CEO, Enron: On the day I left, on August 14th 2001, I believed the company was in strong financial condition.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

SNOW: Now, his answers and explanations clearly have not been very satisfactory for a lot of these members, Democrats and Republicans alike. Many of them have been almost incredulous about the answers they are getting from Jeffrey Skilling. At one point, one member said: "You are a control freak. How is it that you didn't have control over your company?" -- Wolf.

BLITZER: Kate, you have been monitoring these hearings all day. From the questions that we've heard from the members of the panel, what are they trying to get out of Skilling?

SNOW: They clearly have a line of questioning here. What they are worried about is: How much did Jeffrey Skilling know about all these outside partnerships? He told the committee that he doesn't recall being asked to sign off on certain transactions involving these partnerships. He actually said he wasn't required to sign off on any of them.

He was also, though, confronted with minutes showing that one of his colleagues, Andrew Fastow, who was the chief financial officer, who worked for Skilling, said in a board meeting that Mr. Skilling did need to sign off on all of these deals. Mr. Skilling was confronted with that here this afternoon and said: Well, I don't recall that.

Mr. Fastow is not here to explain any of this, because he, this morning, appeared and took the Fifth. He, along with three other Enron executives, Wolf, this morning took the Fifth, their protection under the Constitution, and declined to testify before the committee -- Wolf.

BLITZER: And Mr. Skilling also kept insisting that he resigned as CEO for -- quote -- "personal reasons," nothing to do, apparently, with any concerns he may have had inside the company. He said when he left, the company was in good shape.

Did he ever explain what those personal reasons were?

SNOW: No. I have been listening to almost every minute of this and I haven't heard him explain that. I can tell you, I talked to an associate of Mr. Skilling who tells me there is a deeply personal reason for his departure last summer. And even that associate wouldn't tell me exactly what the reason was, but that it was personal in nature.

BLITZER: OK, Kate Snow.

We'll be monitoring this hearing as it continues.

We are going to take a quick break. When we come back, we will speak to someone who knows intimately what has been going on inside Enron. We will speak to Steve Forbes, the former Republican presidential candidate.

Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back.

We'll get back to Enron and we'll speak with Steve Forbes shortly. But first, there are developments going on at the White House right now.

The Israeli prime minister, Ariel Sharon, arrived there just a few moments ago to meet with President Bush. It's the fourth time in a year the two leaders have met.

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Our Jerusalem bureau chief, Mike Hanna, is now in Washington covering the Sharon visit. He joins us now to give us a little preview.

What do we anticipate, Mike, is going to happen?

MIKE HANNA, CNN JERUSALEM BUREAU CHIEF: Well, Wolf, as you say, it's the fourth time since Ariel Sharon was elected that he has visited with President Bush.

And Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, well, he is under siege in the West Bank city of Ramallah. He hasn't yet received an invitation to the Bush White House. And the message that Sharon is taking to President Bush is his belief that Yasser Arafat is responsible for the ongoing violence in the region and that the U.S. should back Israel in isolating Yasser Arafat politically, and also going so far as to severing ties with the Palestinian leaders.

In recent weeks, Ariel Sharon has held a meeting with senior Palestinian leaders indicating, perhaps, his belief that he can do business with leaders other than Arafat. Now, this is something denied by Mr. Arafat. It's also denied by the Palestinian leaders who undertook talks with Ariel Sharon with the full knowledge and approval of Yasser Arafat himself.

But, still, Sharon will be looking to the Bush administration to step up the pressure on Yasser Arafat, to expect -- ask him to clamp down on the activities of militants. But, at the same time, a known thing among the Israelis is that there is no free lunches in Washington, as one Israeli source says. And that is that they fully expect to hear from President Bush that ways must be found to alleviate the great suffering of many ordinary Palestinians, Wolf.

BLITZER: Has there been any movement whatsoever in recent days, Mike, on any movement on the part of the Israelis and the Palestinians to start a dialogue up once again?

HANNA: Well, there have been these ongoing contacts within the last few weeks between senior Palestinian leaders, such as Ahmed Qureia, also known as Abu Ala. He was present at that meeting with Ariel Sharon. He has also met recently with Shimon Peres, the Israeli foreign minister.

So these contacts have been going on, and this for the first time in a long period of time. There have also been contacts on the ground between security representatives from the two sides for the first time in well over a month. Those have been very important contacts. Although they have not led to any cessation of hostilities in the past, it is very important that they do be seen -- that they are seen to be taking place.

So, within the last week to 10 days, Wolf, there's been a much greater degree of contact between the two sides on the political level, but also on the security level on the ground. And that is hopeful for those hoping to get some kind of beginning to some kind of end to the violence, leading down the road to possibly some kind of resumption of negotiation.

BLITZER: All right, Mike Hanna, our Jerusalem bureau chief, now covering the Sharon visit here in Washington, thank you very much.

And we just heard from Mike what we might expect during this meeting between the prime minister and the president. Now let's hear from both sides of the conflict.

The PLO's chief representative to the United States, Hassan Abdel Rahman, standing by here in Washington. We will be talking with him shortly.

But first let's speak with Israel's former ambassador to the United Nations, Dore Gold.

Ambassador Gold, thank you for joining us.

I know you are in joining the prime minister at these talks here in Washington. You heard Mike Hanna suggest that, in the past few days, there has been a little bit of movement, some sort of dialogue on security matters between the Israelis and the Palestinians. Is there a prospect for some real breakthrough anytime soon?



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DORE GOLD, SPECIAL ADVISER TO ARIEL SHARON: Well, Israel is making very strong efforts to maintain channels of communication open to the Palestinian security personnel, to Abu Ala, Abu Mazin, who met with Prime Minister Sharon just a few days ago.

And we are making all efforts to create, to preserve a set of understandings with the Palestinians. But, at the same time, the people of Israel, the government of Israel, and I would say, many in the U.S. government as well, are exasperated with Yasser Arafat. We have negotiated about nine cease-fires with Mr. Arafat under American auspices. He has failed to fulfill a single cease-fire. And the situation has just deteriorated.

BLITZER: Ambassador Gold, as you know, there was an enormous amount of publicity given to some recent comments from the prime minister in an interview with the Israeli newspaper "Maariv," in which he seemed to suggest he wished that the Israelis had assassinated Yasser Arafat in 1982 when he withdrew from Beirut. But, at the same time, in the same interview, he said there is still hope he can negotiate peace with Yasser Arafat.

What is the -- give us the context. What was his point?

GOLD: Well, I think the main point the prime minister will express with the president is tremendous appreciation of President Bush's State of the Union address: the determined struggle of the U.S. government against terrorism worldwide.

Israelis together feel that there is no cause, no possible grievance, no possible sense of denial that the Palestinians can voice that can possibly justify the kind of attacks we have been facing. Just last night in Moshav in the Jordan Valley, a mother and her son were butchered by Palestinian gunmen.

We want this violence to come to an end. If the violence comes to an end, if the intifada that has been launched against Israel since last October of 2000 comes to an end, we can negotiate and we can reach peace. But we are saying that violence is diametrically opposed to the concept of peacemaking, to the concept of diplomacy.

BLITZER: "The New York Times" had an editorial reacting to the op-ed piece that Yasser Arafat wrote last Sunday condemning terrorism.

But in "The New York Times" editorial, it said this about Israel's behavior: "The growing harshness of Israeli military practices in the West Bank and Gaza is creating thousands of potential suicide bombers and Israel haters, as well as coarsening a generation of young Israeli soldiers. The endless growth of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is depriving Palestinians of hope."

Is your government taking steps to create greater hope for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza?

GOLD: Well, first of all, I have to say that, when Yasser Arafat wrote in "The New York Times," his op-ed, that he seeks peace and that he is against violence, what we're seeing is what Yasser Arafat says in Arabic to his people. And he speaks about jihad, holy war. He speaks about shuhada, martyrs and martyrdom. And, therefore, we take much more seriously what he says in Arabic than what he writes in English in "The New York Times."

But, certainly, we hold out hope to the Palestinians. We believe that Yasser Arafat is hurting the interests not just of Israel, but he is hurting the interests of the Palestinians as a whole, because the people of Israel truly want peace. They just refuse to acquiesce to this wave of violence that's being thrown against us.

BLITZER: Ambassador Dore Gold, thank you very much for joining us.

And let's get the Palestinian response now. Joining me now here in Washington is the PLO representative to the United States, Hassan Abdel Rahman.

Ambassador Rahman, thanks for joining us.



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The comments that Yasser Arafat wrote in "The New York Times" in which he condemned terrorism against Israeli civilians, has he uttered those words in Arabic to the Palestinian people?

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO UNITED STATES: You know that anything written in English, in Spanish, in Japanese is translated immediately to all languages.

BLITZER: Was this article in "The New York Times" reprinted in the Palestinian press?

RAHMAN: Of course. Yes. And it was broadcast over Al-Jazeera television and over MBC and every single Arab network. So this is not -- this is the position of Yasser Arafat from day one.

Yasser Arafat is opposed to terrorism against civilians, whether it is against Palestinian civilians or Israeli civilians. Yasser Arafat went further. He put forward his vision for peace and he delineated the principles for peace with Israel. He accepted Israel within the borders of 1967. We are waiting for Mr. Sharon to present us with his vision for peace with the Palestinians. We have not seen it.

BLITZER: But it's not just the prime minister of Israel. It's the Bush administration which is repeatedly complaining in recent days that the Palestinian Authority is not doing everything it can to stop these suicide bombers going out against Israeli civilians.

RAHMAN: But you know that this is the position of some people in the Bush administration. But there is an international consensus.

BLITZER: But the president of the United States keeps saying it.

RAHMAN: Yes, of course. But, you know, with due respect to the president of the United States, if he wants to have balance, he also should have pointed to what Mr. Sharon needs to do, because only to look at what the Palestinians need to do is not going to solve the problem.

There is two parties there. The climate that is created by Mr. Sharon in the Palestinian territories is absolutely conducive towards more violence. You cannot expect a whole population that finds itself under siege -- its economic infrastructure is destroyed. Every single Palestinian man and woman is suffering from those practices. There is assassination of Palestinian community leaders, home demolition. Every crime that you can name is committed by the Israeli army in the Palestinian territories. This kind of environment cannot lead to calming the situation.

(CROSSTALK)

BLITZER: Let me interrupt for a second, because, in recent days, we have heard, really for the first time, some Palestinians openly talking about a successor to Yasser Arafat. You read about it. You have seen it.

Give us the sense. What is the Palestinian Authority president planning on doing? Is he setting the stage for someone to take over for him?

RAHMAN: Yasser Arafat was elected by the Palestinian people. He was elected in free elections in 1996. He got over 70 percent of the votes. He is -- his legitimacy comes from the Palestinian people and not from anybody else, whether it is Sharon or anyone else other than Sharon. Therefore, I don't take those conversations in...

BLITZER: So he is staying put? He is not giving up?

RAHMAN: Absolutely. He will not give up, because the Palestinian people will not let him give up.

It is not Sharon who decides who is the leader of the Palestinians, because, let me tell you what. The Palestinian people don't like Sharon. And they feel that he is not legitimate. But that's not our business. That is the business of the Israeli people.

We -- if the Israelis want to demonize Yasser Arafat -- which I have heard all over by every single member of this government -- this is not the way to do it. Look at what Europe is doing. Europe is extending -- the European Parliament, who is the ally of the United States, is extending an invitation to Yasser Arafat.

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BLITZER: But so far he hasn't met with President Bush yet.

RAHMAN: But President Bush -- we know that the United States was the last in the whole world to recognize the Palestinian rights. It was not the first. So we understand the realities in Washington. But that does not make what happens in Washington the right thing.

BLITZER: We, unfortunately, have to leave it there.

Ambassador Rahman, thank you for coming on.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

BLITZER: OK.

And when we come back, we'll have more on the Enron hearings on Capitol Hill. We'll also speak with Steve Forbes, the former Republican presidential candidate.

Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back.

Joining us now from New York with his business insight is Steve Forbes. He's the editor in chief of "Forbes" magazine and, of course, a former Republican presidential candidate.

Mr. Forbes, thanks for joining us.

They are wrapping up this Enron hearing that's been going on all day in the House of Representatives. The testimony from Jeff Skilling, the former CEO, does that ring possibly true that he was out of the loop when he resigned, didn't know about the potential disaster unfolding there?

STEVE FORBES, PRESIDENT & CEO, FORBES INC.: Well, he certainly gave what you might call very skillful testimony. He was obviously well prepared and knew what questions he was going to be asked.

I think it stretches the strain of credibility to say that he was completely ignorant of what was going on. And certainly these hearings are just the beginning. In fact there are probably so many hearings that are going to be going on, they will almost match the number of partnerships that Enron did.

But, in terms of impact, as we unfold and get into the guts of Enron, I think the major changes, the fallout from Enron is already taking place. There's hardly a major corporation in America today that is not making major changes in their audit committees. All of the major audit companies are now separating their auditing and their other services. So major changes are coming even before the hearings really get under way.

BLITZER: If there is some fuzzy math out there in the auditing and the bookkeeping procedures of these big corporations, as was the case, of course, at Enron, couldn't this have an enormous impact on the economic recovery from this current recession?

FORBES: No, I think what you are seeing now is really a healthy process. Any company who is under suspicion -- even General Electric, which is a superb company, when there were questions about their accounting, they took a hit in the stock market. This is a cleansing process that is going on.

And the sooner that it happens, the sooner the questionable companies get exposed, I think you will see, probably within three months, a major recovery within the financial markets, as long as the Fed doesn't mess up. But this is part and parcel of getting the bad out of the way and preparing the ground for a better recovery.

BLITZER: And when you say that as long as the Fed doesn't mess up, what does that mean?

FORBES: In terms of pumping in liquidity, credit, into the banking system. For a while, they were making the same mistake the Bank of Japan made, which was to lower interest rates but not supply enough credit or money to the banking system. Right now, even though money is relatively cheap in

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America, most small businesses, most medium-sized businesses, and now a number of large corporations cannot get credit. Their credit lines are being squeezed.

So the product is cheap, but you can't get it. And that is going to hurt the recovery. I think the Fed is beginning to recognize that it has a problem. And I they will take steps to make sure we don't go the way of Japan.

BLITZER: To his credit, Jeff Skilling did not plead the Fifth -- take the Fifth Amendment, as so many other top executives of Enron did today and earlier. But if you were a criminal defense attorney, is that smart on his part?

FORBES: Well, I certainly think, in terms of trying to get some credibility with the public, which is ultimately going to be the jury, I think it was probably smart, although highly high-risk strategy. Instead of looking like a scoundrel like "The Sopranos" taking the Fifth Amendment, he went out there, faced the harsh questions. And even if he didn't always give convincing answers, at least he was out there taking the heat.

And so, given what's going to happen, that's probably a better thing to do, given the position he had as CEO, of taking it now, rather than being passive and getting killed in a courtroom.

BLITZER: OK, Steve Forbes, always good to have you on the show. Thank you very much.

FORBES: It's good to be with you. Thank you.

BLITZER: Thank you.

And let's go now to New York and get a preview of "LOU DOBBS MONEYLINE." That begins right at the top of the hour -- Lou.

LOU DOBBS, "LOU DOBBS MONEYLINE": Wolf, thank you very much.

We'll of course have A full report on the Enron executives who today appeared on Capitol Hill, some who testified and some who chose to take the Fifth. We will also hear from a former assistant attorney general who says Vice President Dick Cheney is right and Congress is wrong. And Michael Holland will be with us to tell us what effect Enron is having on Wall Street as this investigation continues -- all of that, the president live with Ariel Sharon at the top of the hour.

Please join us -- Wolf, back to you.

BLITZER: Thank you very much, Lou.

And straight ahead, I will answer some of your e-mails. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Our Web question of the day: "Will the United States ever capture or kill Osama bin Laden?" Check out the results. We'll have a new question tomorrow on my Web site: CNN.com/Wolf.

And now time to hear from you, our viewers.

This from Curtis in Maine: "Wolf, do you really think it is proper for a president to use words like evil? Is this professional? As an American, I'm frightened by his rhetoric. Where is the room for dialogue? Are we becoming a war machine?"

Ernie from Oklahoma writes: "Personally, I don't care how anyone in the former Clinton administration feels about anything. They did nothing about anything for eight years. And largely because of their inattention, budget-cutting, et cetera, we have the problems we have today in the world. If they had stayed the course in Somalia, gone after bin Laden long ago, and not sliced the heart out of the CIA, we might not have had 9/11.

Owen from Pennsylvania writes: "Let's be honest, Wolf. You don't actually read your own e-mail, do you? I must say, you're the only journalist who has a beard on camera and doesn't resemble Grizzly Adams in some way, shape or from. Love the show."

Trouble on United Airlines Flight; Former Enron CEO Testifies Before Congress CNN February 7, 2002 Thursday

Owen, you will be happy to know I read every one of these e-mails every day. I take your comments very seriously, indeed. About the beard, no comment.

I will be back in one hour with the "War Room." The Senate International vice chairman, Richard Shelby, will be among my guests. That's at 7:00 Eastern, 4:00 Pacific.

And until then, thanks very much for watching. I'm Wolf Blitzer in Washington. CNN's coverage of America's new war continues with "LOU DOBBS MONEYLINE." That begins right now. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT [www.fdch.com](http://www.fdch.com)

LOAD-DATE: July 11, 2003







Interview With Hassan Abdel Rahman CNN February 3, 2002 Sunday



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CNN

SHOW: CNN SUNDAY NIGHT 22:00

February 3, 2002 Sunday

Transcript # 020306CN.V89

SECTION: News; International

LENGTH: 753 words

HEADLINE: Interview With Hassan Abdel Rahman

GUESTS: Hassan Abdel Rahman

BYLINE: Catherine Callaway

HIGHLIGHT:

Hassan Abdel Rahman, Palestinian representative in the United States, discusses Yasser Arafat's recent op-ed piece and the Israeli response to the op-ed.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

CATHERINE CALLAWAY, CNN ANCHOR: For a Palestinian perspective, we turn now to Hassan Abdel Rahman, the Palestinian representative to the U.S., who's joining us from Washington. Thank you very much for being with us again, sir. Were you able to hear Shimon Peres' comments there, and if so, what is your reaction to what he had to say?

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REP. TO THE U.S.: Well, I believe that Mr. Shimon Peres is speaking of resolution to (UNINTELLIGIBLE). We are speaking of the borders of 1967. That's what President Arafat is talking about.

What we are saying, that we accept the right of Israel to live within the 1967 boundaries, and that Israel should accept the right of the Palestinian people to establish their own independent state on the 22 percent of historic Palestine, which is the West Bank and Gaza.

Now, the issue of Jerusalem, I think there is a little bit of distortion in the position of Mr. Shimon Peres. He is saying, the pragmatic situation in Jerusalem. Well, Jerusalem also was occupied -- East Jerusalem at least in 1967. And Jerusalem is not only mosques and churches. Jerusalem is the home of 220,000 Palestinians who live in East Jerusalem, which was next to Israel illegally. No country in the world, including the United States of America, accepted Jerusalem's annexation.

Interview With Hassan Abdel Rahman CNN February 3, 2002 Sunday

And therefore, if Israel is really serious about achieving peace, they have to accept that West Jerusalem is Israeli, East Jerusalem is Palestinian. West Jerusalem is the capital of Israel; East Jerusalem is the capital of Palestine. And the two Jerusalems, East as well as West, will constitute an open city accessible to both Palestinians and Jews -- and Israelis. That's the realistic and the fair solution for Jerusalem.

As far as the refugee question is concerned, I think there is an international consensus that we have to have a fair and realistic solution for the Palestinian refugee problem. You cannot just brush the refugee problem under the table. It has to be dealt with, because it's at the heart of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and therefore for our future generations of Palestinians and Israelis to live together, we need to solve this issue and solve it in a way that will ensure the rights of those refugees.

Yasser Arafat said that the solution of the refugee problem should not turn Israel into a Palestinian state. And we agree with that, because we do not want to change the demographic balance within Israel. Israel would continue to be an Israeli state, but that does not mean that the issue of refugees does not have to be brushed under the table.

The Jewish settlements, they were established illegally in Palestinian territories. They have to be removed in order for us to be able to establish the kind of peace that we want to establish with Israel.

CALLAWAY: So, what is Arafat willing to bring to the table in the form of a compromise that he wasn't able to bring to the table in the past?

RAHMAN: Well, I mean, Yasser Arafat, what he is saying is that I'm accepting Israel as a state within its boundaries of 1967. Israel should accept the Palestinian state within the boundaries of 1967, period -- 22 percent for the Palestinians, 78 percent for Israel. That's how we can establish peace. That will allow us to coexist next to each other.

This is a very, very important compromise, because the Palestinians -- there are many Palestinians who believe all of Palestine was Palestinian. In fact, even before I was born, when I was born, all of Palestine was Palestinian. Now, we for the sake of peace are saying to the Israelis, we will accept 22 percent of what was our homeland, and we will concede to you 78 percent. Please, don't try to come and share the 22 percent that is ours, because then you will be taking too much away from us, and this would not be acceptable to the Palestinian people.

I think there is an international consensus over this. I think every single state in the world supports this Palestinian position.

CALLAWAY: Hassan Abdel Rahman, good luck to you.

RAHMAN: Thank you very much.

CALLAWAY: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) peace process move forward for you.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

CALLAWAY: And thank you for being with us.

RAHMAN: Thank you very much for having me. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT [www.fdch.com](http://www.fdch.com)

LOAD-DATE: February 4, 2002





Bush urges Mubarak to defend US tough stance against Arafat Channel NewsAsia January 29, 2002 Tuesday





Q&A CNN INTERNATIONAL January 29, 2002 Tuesday



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CNN INTERNATIONAL

SHOW: Q&A WITH ZAIN VERJEE 11:30 AM Eastern Standard Time

January 29, 2002 Tuesday

Transcript # 012901cb.k19

SECTION: NEWS; INTERNATIONAL

LENGTH: 3981 words

HEADLINE: Q&A

GUESTS: Robert Satloff, Hassan Abdel Rahman, Alon Pinkas

BYLINE: Zain Verjee, John King

HIGHLIGHT:

A look at possible sanctions the United States could impose on Palestinians, including severing ties with Yasser Arafat.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: I am disappointed in Yasser Arafat. He must make a full effort to rout out terror in the Middle East.

DICK CHENEY, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: He knows what he has to do. He needs to control the violence emanating from Palestine, Gaza, the West Bank, against Israeli civilians.

ZAIN VERJEE, CNN ANCHOR (voice-over): Candid criticisms of the Palestinian leader from the White House, a clear signal: do something about the violence, or else.

Or else what? Some in Washington say the severing of ties with Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority. Is that the way to go?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The dialogue with the PLO and the contacts with the PLO and with Chairman Arafat serves the interest of peace. Any interruption of those relations would definitely be counterproductive.

VERJEE: Israel says Arafat's actions are counterproductive.

Q&A CNN INTERNATIONAL January 29, 2002 Tuesday

SIMON PERES, ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER: Yasser Arafat, too, must understand that the road to peace is a political road, not a road of terror.

VERJEE: On Q&A, should the United States cut off ties with the Palestinian Authority.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

VERJEE: Welcome to Q&A.

Almost every day, someone is killed in the Middle East. Sometimes it's an Israeli. Sometimes it's a Palestinian. Both sides blame each other. There's bloody retribution and the violence spins on and on.

Now the United States has taken a position that could shift policy in the Middle East and effect the situation on the ground.

Here's CNN's John King.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOHN KING, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): The president made clear his patience with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat is running short.

BUSH: You know, ordering up weapons that were intercepted on a boat headed for that part of the world is not part of fighting terror. That's enhancing terrorism, and I was very disappointed in him.

KING: Top advisors say Mr. Bush is angry that Mr. Arafat continues to deny Palestinian Authority involvement in a major arms shipment seized by Israel earlier this month.

Senior U.S. officials say there is clear evidence and that Mr. Bush held an animated discussion with his national security team Friday to discuss options.

They include the dramatic step of severing United States ties with the Palestinian Authority and several lesser sanctions: adding Arafat's security force to the United States list of terrorist groups, closing the Palestinian Authority's Washington office, and ending or suspending the work of Bush's special Mideast envoy, Anthony Zinni.

Members of Congress just back from the region are among those demanding a tougher United States line.

REP. GARY ACKERMAN (D), NEW YORK: We have to take steps and say you have not kept your end of the deal, we're not giving you this basket of goodies.

KING: But some international policy veterans say punishing Mr. Arafat could prove counterproductive.

LEE HAMILTON, WOODROW WILSON CENTER: I don't know what the alternative is, and to isolate him, which is another word of saying humiliating him, I do not think is the path to peace.

KING: Sources tell CNN Mr. Arafat is being told he must quickly acknowledge Palestinian Authority involvement in the arms shipment, arrest and detain close advisors implicated in the arms deal, and drop what the White House considers a reluctance to crack down on terror groups operating in the Palestinian territories.

COLIN POWELL, SECRETARY OF STATE: He knows what is expected of the Palestinian Authority and of him as the leader of that authority.

KING: The president appealed for help last week in letters to the leaders of Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Bush asked them to pressure Mr. Arafat and shared some of what one senior official said was compelling and conclusive evidence that senior Palestinian Authority officials were involved in the weapons shipment.

Q&amp;A CNN INTERNATIONAL January 29, 2002 Tuesday

Secretary Powell is said by sources to favor incremental sanctions if Mr. Arafat does not act soon. Vice President Cheney and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld favor breaking relations.

Administration officials say there is no firm deadline for the president to make a decision on sanctions. But one senior official put it this way, Mr. Arafat -- quote -- "should not think for a minute that time is on his side."

John King, CNN, the White House.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

VERJEE: Joining us from Washington now, is Robert Satloff. He's the executive director for the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Robert, do you think the United States will sever ties with Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority?

ROBERT SATLOFF, WINEP: There is an intensive debate underway at the highest levels of the administration just about this.

The mere fact that we are having this debate in Washington is itself a sign of how far the entire issue has moved in the American policy circles. Will they in fact sever ties? I don't know. Perhaps. It is quite a change of policy.

The path of least resistance is of course just to be a bit tougher on Arafat, a bit tougher on the Palestinians. Will they go all the way? It's a big decision. I don't think the president has made it yet. I think a lot will depend on how he sees the reaction of such a decision might play in the context of the wider war on terrorism.

VERJEE: Do you think that any decision that's taken on either one of those counts, either to sever ties or impose these lesser sanctions that you're talking about, and that John King just mentioned, would be counterproductive in the Middle East?

SATLOFF: Well, I think if one takes the longer view, I think that chances are that it will be helpful and constructive.

It was difficult before the Karine-A weapons boat. It was difficult to contemplate dealing further with the chairman because of his complicity or acts of omission or commission in the fight against terrorism. But the weapons boat I think does change the mind-set in Washington in many respects, because here you have the Palestinian Authority reaching out and doing business with America's foremost ideological and operational adversary in the region, Iran, which is the leading state sponsor of terrorism, to supply a huge cache of weapons for use in a military conflict against Israel.

That changes the regional dynamic, and that changes the fundamental way of thinking about the situation, as far as Washington is concerned.

VERJEE: I just want to point out to, though, that the Palestinian Authority and Yasser Arafat has denied complicity or involvement in the shipment on the Karine-A.

But with a shift in the mind-set in Washington, in United States policy, is it possible that the United States can then be perceived as an honest broker in any way in the Middle East?

SATLOFF: Well, I think should there be such a decision by the United States, it will likely be coupled with a declaration reemphasizing how much America wants to proceed down the path of helping to create an independent Palestinian state at peace with Israel. And all the things the United States would do to help push that process forward, should there be a Palestinian leadership that is truly committed to peaceful resolution of conflict.

I think the goal would be to try to separate our desire for an outcome, an independent Palestine at peace with Israel, from this particular Palestinian leadership. Possibly we could do that, and possibly we could actually make positive inroads among the people of the region, but that is still very much an open question.

Q&A CNN INTERNATIONAL January 29, 2002 Tuesday

VERJEE: Here's what Yasser Arafat had to say when speaking in an interview on Israeli television in December last year about the United States. Just take a listen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

YASSER ARAFAT, CHAIRMAN, PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY (via interpreter): Who is standing by you? The Americans. Who sends you the planes? The Americans. Who sends you the tanks? The Americans. Who sends you the money? The Americans. Don't mention the Americans to me.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

VERJEE: A lot of resentment against the United States we're hearing there from Yasser Arafat. What do you think of that?

SATLOFF: Well, I think if you go back over the last decade, we've seen histrionics go up and down. The fact is that Yasser Arafat has always sought a relationship with Washington. It has been a key strategic objective of his. I think the United States is correct to think that a turn by the Palestinian Authority to a strategic relationship with Iran must call into question what sort of relationship we should have with the Palestinian Authority.

VERJEE: But you don't think that anything Yasser Arafat had to say there sort of clouds the way the United States is perceived in the Middle East and that they actually can't be honest brokers, whatever they do, if that's the perception and the resentment?

SATLOFF: No. I think if you look at the various statements by the officials in the region. Crown Prince Abdullah in today's "Washington Post," even he talks about excellent relations with the United States while recognizing that there is a difference of opinion on the issues of Israel and the Palestinians.

We don't have across the Middle East today riots from Rabat to Oman in support of Yasser Arafat. We don't have the leaders of the region publicly clamoring for America to resuscitate Yasser Arafat. He is the one who is very isolated, who has very few friends.

I think it is fair to say that people around the region are concerned about the fate of the Palestinians, and it is very important for the United States to be concerned about the fate of the Palestinians. We want to be friends with the Palestinian people, but right now we have to deal with the fact that the Palestinian leadership seems to have made decisions which run fundamentally contrary to its commitment to peaceful resolution of conflict.

VERJEE: Does the United States have any clear strategy on what to actually do in the long-term rather than dealing with just these short-term measures which could potentially backfire?

SATLOFF: Well, right now the larger context of American efforts in the Middle East revolve around the war on terrorism. Thankfully, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as horrible as it has been over the last 16 months of uprising, it has not spread beyond the Israeli-Palestinian arena.

So there is a great sigh of relief that indeed Arab states, Egypt, Jordan specifically, have not gotten involved militarily on the side of the Palestinians in the conflict with Israeli. Maintaining this conflict management approach of keeping the conflict limited as far as possible has proven very successful.

As we look into the long-term, I don't think there is anybody in Washington who believes that a real peace deal can be done with the current leadership of the Palestinian Authority.

VERJEE: Robert Satloff, we'll have to leave it there. The executive director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. Thanks for being on Q&A.

SATLOFF: You're welcome.

VERJEE: Coming up, Israeli and Palestinian perspectives on the United States' tough talk.

You're watching Q&A.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

Q&A CNN INTERNATIONAL January 29, 2002 Tuesday

VERJEE: Welcome back.

How will an apparently changing United States policy in the Middle East effect the crisis there?

Joining us from New York, Alon Pinkas, the Israeli counsel general, and in Washington, Hassan Abdel Rahman, the chief Palestinian representative to the United States. Thank you both for being with us on Q&A.

Hassan, you first. The Americans say they are disappointed in Yasser Arafat. They want him to do more. They're talking of severing ties, imposing lesser sanctions. You're aware of that. What's your response?

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF PALESTINIAN REP. TO THE U.S.: My response is what the Europeans said yesterday to President Bush. They said that his statement was unfair, that his statement is not helpful, and that the United States, by doing this, will undercut itself from being an honest, acceptable broker in the Middle East peace process.

They called on the United States to consider Yasser Arafat as a serious partner in peace. And they were very critical of the policies of Mr. Sharon in the Palestinian territories, which are creating a climate of anger, frustration among the Palestinian people, because killing Palestinians, demolishing homes, keeping 3.2 million Palestinians under siege for so long is absolutely not the way to achieve the calm that we desire in the territories, and to go back to the peace process that we want with the Israelis.

VERJEE: Alon Pinkas, were President Bush's comments unhelpful, unfair?

ALON PINKAS, ISRAELI COUNSEL GENERAL: No, I don't think that they were neither. I think if Mr. Arafat learns from President Bush or indeed from the entire American system on how to conduct business and how to be a leader, he would do well to perform a State of the Union address to the Palestinians and explain to the Palestinian people -- in a state of disunion, rather -- why he failed them for so many years, why he failed them in the last 15 months. Why he failed the peace process, why he failed American trust.

And in that context, you have to look at President Bush's remarks. No one was a better friend of the Palestinian cause than President Clinton, and they double crossed him. No one was a better friend of the Palestinian right for self-determination than the three last successful last Israeli governments, and they betrayed our trust.

And I think it's about time that honest Palestinian politicians, as Mr. Abdel Rahman, who is on this show with me, ask themselves a very simple question: what did this Palestinian leadership deliver to the Palestinian people except for misery, tragedy and death?

VERJEE: I want to take a look, though, at some of the sanctions that are being touted around that could potentially happen. There's a possibility, Mr. Rahman, that your office could be closed in the United States. Is that true? Can that happen?

RAHMAN: Well, I hope not. I hope not.

But let me go back to what Mr. Pinkas just said. You know that he is pointing fingers at what is the responsibility of Yasser Arafat, but he is not saying that the Palestinian people have been living under Israeli occupation for 35 years. That Israeli has stolen Palestinian land and built Jewish settlements. That Palestinian leaders have been killed. Palestinian children have been made orphans. Palestinian women have been made widows. That our future has been stolen away from us.

Israeli has turned the Palestinian people from a peaceful people into an angry people, a violent people, because no people in the world, name me one people, who can live under foreign military occupation of other people for 35 years and do not react.

Mr. Pinkas, let me just...

VERJEE: Make your point and have Alon respond to that.

Q&amp;A CNN INTERNATIONAL January 29, 2002 Tuesday

RAHMAN: What I am saying is, Mr. Pinkas, I suggest that you look at the behavior of Israel. The criminal behavior of the Israeli army, which was protested today by 50 officers and 50 Israeli soldiers who decided not to serve in the West Bank and Gaza because of the atrocities that the Israeli army is committing against the Palestinians there.

VERJEE: Mr. Pinkas.

PINKAS: Mr. Rahman would do well to stop with the self-pity and all those years of denial and this ongoing monologue that leads nowhere. You should experiment with telling the truth, at least to your self if not to CNN viewers, Mr. Abdel Rahman.

VERJEE: What do you mean by that?

PINKAS: I'll tell you exactly what I mean, Zain. The occupation we sought to end, and we called in Camp David. The Palestinians never showed up, and I'm sorry to use that line again and again and again, but it's enough living in this denial.

The Palestinian leadership let down President Clinton, let down at least half of the Israeli, public, and let down 90 percent of the Palestinian people.

This is not about occupation. And this anger and lack of future that you contend that we've brought about you, brought on to you, rather, is ridiculous, and you know it.

It's not as if the Palestinians were a thriving democracy, nor are the a thriving democracy right now. It is self-inflicted tragedy after tragedy.

Let me just conclude with one sentence, Zain.

VERJEE: Briefly.

PINKAS: This tragedy has been going on since 1948, for five decades, in which the Palestinians, and I know it's a cliché, but you've got to say what you've got to say, the Palestinians have missed every single opportunity that they had, that the world and Israel, presented to them.

VERJEE: OK. Look, there are clear arguments on both sides, but for the next few minutes I want to focus on the United States' decisions, its apparent change in policy in the region, and how it's going to effect the Middle East.

Mr. Pinkas, do you want the United States to cut ties with Yasser Arafat? That's one of the things that's being put on the table. And if you do, what will that achieve and is that the right way to go?

PINKAS: Zain, it's inappropriate for me to say what I think the United States should or ought to do.

I think the United States...

VERJEE: What does Israel want?

PINKAS: Well, Israel wants the United States to remain committed to peace. And Israel wants the United States to be involved...

VERJEE: So does that mean that cutting ties and other sanctions...

PINKAS: I'll explain in a second. And Israel wants the United States to remain committed to stability in the region. Israel wants the United States to remain politically linked and tied.

In order to do that, the United States needs an interlocutor, and the United States needs a partner on the Palestinian side. And what you see in the United States in the last 15 months, but especially in the last two or three months, is a realization that Mr. Arafat has exhausted his life span or outlived his usefulness as a political partner.

He is not credible. He is not trustworthy. He cannot deliver a deal. He cannot deliver it internally for the Palestinians. He cannot deliver it to Israel, and he certainly abused the trust of the United States of America.



Q&amp;A CNN INTERNATIONAL January 29, 2002 Tuesday

So I'm not...

VERJEE: One way Yasser Arafat has undermined his own credibility, according to the United States and Israel, they make the argument that, look, that Karine-A ship that was carrying the arms. That was evidence enough of the Palestinian Authority's connection to that and to violence in the Middle East.

Mr. Rahman, your response to what Mr. Pinkas was saying, because incidents like that just undermine Yasser Arafat.

RAHMAN: First of all, Yasser Arafat has not acquired his credibility from Mr. Pinkas or from the Israeli government. Yasser Arafat is elected...

PINKAS: And he has a Nobel Prize to prove it...

RAHMAN: Can you hold? I waited for you, Mr. Pinkas, until you finished.

PINKAS: Go ahead.

RAHMAN: Please give me that courtesy.

Yasser Arafat is the elected leader of the Palestinian people. Yasser Arafat kept his commitment to all agreements that we signed with Israel. Israel has reneged on every single agreement that we signed with Israel, including the third deployment of Israeli troops into the Palestinian territories. The economic protocol that we signed with Israel not to build Jewish settlements in Palestinian territories.

Israel reneged on those agreements, and that's what created the lack of confidence among the Palestinian people.

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: Please. You are ridiculing the complaints of the Palestinian people against Israel, but you never refuting any of the things that I said...

PINKAS: I can refute it by acknowledging you're lying.

RAHMAN: I don't want you, because you did not.

PINKAS: I know you don't, because you hate being confused with facts.

RAHMAN: You know that what I said is true. When you have the United States, and we know why the United States is biased towards Israel, you know, the power of the American Jewish lobby in the United States is very, very influential...

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: ... in the foreign policy.

VERJEE: Make your point, Mr. Rahman.

RAHMAN: Yes, my point is we have to look at what the international community is saying also. The closest allies of Europe in the Middle East and in Europe, they are telling the United States don't isolate yourself with Israel in one corner, because that will be very counterproductive to the peace process...

VERJEE: Mr. Rahman, the Palestinians keep saying the same thing. We've heard these arguments over and over again. No one appears to be listening to you. Don't you think it's time that the Palestinian Authority should change its strategy, do something about it, take the ownership of peace into your own hands and you come up with something instead of waiting for Israel or the United States to come up with it? You can shift the mood.

RAHMAN: We are not saying to the United States that they should replace us or be substituted for our actions. What we are saying is that under the state of siege in which we live, under the situation of total closure of the Palestinian territories, when Palestinian police stations are being bombarded by Israel, when the infrastructure of the economy of the Palestinian territory, it is difficult to succeed in combatant

Q&A CNN INTERNATIONAL January 29, 2002 Tuesday

violence, unless there is a commitment and change of behavior by the Israeli military forces of occupation, it is difficult for Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority to succeed.

VERJEE: Alon Pinkas, I want to get Alon Pinkas in on this.

Mr. Pinkas, the crisis is just not about Israeli security only. At the heart of it, what Mr. Rahman is bringing up is the occupation by Israel of Palestinian territory. I mean, you're boxing in Yasser Arafat. You know, the violence is spinning out of control. What's that going to get you? Don't you think that Israeli should come up with something and think of a way to push the issues forward, because politically getting rid of Yasser Arafat isn't going to get you anywhere, is it?

PINKAS: You're absolutely right. We're not getting rid of Mr. Arafat politically. He did it himself. This is self-inflicted, like almost every other tragedy the Palestinian people have experienced or undergone.

But back to your question, we did come up with a peace plan at Camp David. And I know...

VERJEE: But don't keep bringing up Camp David, though. Let's push it forward, though. What can Israeli do now?

PINKAS: I cannot not bring Camp David up. That was a comprehensive peace plan that was put on the table under the auspices of an American president with the support of the entire international community that Mr. Abdel Rahman invokes -- and incidentally, this invocation of the international community is reminiscent of the 60's and the 70's in which the Palestinian found refuge in the lovely hands of East Germany and Bulgaria and the Soviet Union.

So when it's convenient to the Palestinians, the United States is an ally. And when it's not, they use Belgium or France or Italy. But that's beside the point.

VERJEE: Alon Pinkas, we're out of time. The Israeli counsel general. Hassan Abdel Rahman, the chief Palestinian representative to the United States. Good talking to you on Q&A. We'll have to have you back on the show to finish your conversation.

Jim Clancy is going to be back for another edition of Q&A in just a few hours. That's at 20:30 GMT.

That's at Q&A for now. The news continues, here on CNN.

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LOAD-DATE: September 15, 2003

Hassan Abdel Rahman 23:10 Mecca Time, AL-JAZEERA Al-Jazeera January 25, 2002 Friday

**SHOW:** CNN CROSSFIRE 19:30

**January 25, 2002 Friday**

**Transcript # 012500CN.V20**

**SECTION:** News; Domestic

**LENGTH:** 3786 words

**HEADLINE:** Should U.S. Cut Ties to Yasser Arafat?; Should Utah Gun Owners Be Allowed to Carry Concealed Weapons Into Olympic Events?

**GUESTS:** **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Eric Cantor, Maura Carabello, Mark Shurtleff

**BYLINE:** Bill Press, Robert Novak

**HIGHLIGHT:**

Should the United States cut all ties to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat?

Then, an issue of Olympic proportions: Should Utah gun owners be allowed to carry concealed weapons into Olympic events?

**BODY:**

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: I am disappointed in Yasser Arafat. He must make a full effort to ride out terror in the Middle East.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BILL PRESS, CO-HOST: Should the United States cut all ties to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat? And an issue of Olympic proportions. Should Utah gun owners be allowed to carry concealed weapons into Olympic events?

ANNOUNCER: Live from Washington, CROSSFIRE. On the left, Bill Press. On the right, Robert Novak. In the crossfire, chief Palestinian representative to the U.S., **Hasan Abdel Rahman** and Republican Congressman Eric Cantor of Virginia,

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CNN CROSSFIRE 19:30 January 25, 2002 Friday

chairman of the congressional task force on terrorism. And later in Salt Lake City, Utah, Maura Carabello, director of the Utah Gun Violence Prevention Center and Utah Attorney General Mark Shurtleff.

PRESS: It's CROSSFIRE. Thanks for joining us. Just when it looked like things couldn't get any worse for Yasser Arafat, they just did. President Bush has refused to meet with him. Ariel Sharon won't even shake his hand. And the Palestinian leader has been practically under house arrest for weeks. Now the Bush White House is talking about cutting him out of the picture, period. No more contact. No more meetings. No more dough. Our debate tonight, is this the way to peace in the Middle East and who are we to dictate who speaks for the Palestinian Authority?

Bob Novak.

BOB NOVAK, CO-HOST: Congressman Cantor, we interviewed on "NOVAK HUNT & SHIELDS" today, a taped interview with Dick Gephardt, who just got back from the Middle East. Be on at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday night. And I think you'll agree Dick Gephardt is no great friend of the PLO. We asked him, if you don't talk to Arafat, who do you talk to? This is what he answered.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP RICHARD GEPHARDT (D), MINORITY LEADER: We did talk to other Palestinian leaders who are younger and coming along. There's a big split, I'm sure in that group. Everybody doesn't see things alike, no more than we see things alike in the Democratic party here, but he is still their leader.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

NOVAK: That's the point. He is still their leader. If you don't talk to Yasser Arafat, you don't talk to anybody. Isn't that what the Israeli government wants, not to talk to anybody?

REP. ERIC CANTOR (R-VA), CHMRN. TERRORISM TASK FORCE: Bob, he might be their leader, but let's face it. He has demonstrated a willingness to engage in terrorist activities. I put in a bill yesterday in Congress to end U.S. taxpayer support of Yasser Arafat. President Bush has laid down very clearly that we in the United States will not support terrorists, will not support those who harbor them.

Yasser Arafat, two weeks ago, was seen to be importing 50 tons of Kalashnikov (sic) rockets and weapons in a boat from Iran. He has also demonstrated a willingness to kill children at this point. We are not in this country going to support a terrorist in activities like that.

NOVAK: Well, you know, one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. A lot of the future leaders of the Israeli government were terrorists blowing up people. And isn't it a fact that the death toll of Palestinians has been so much greater than the death toll of Israelis in this period? I mean, who is the terrorist when you take weapons of war and attack civilian areas? Is that -- killing innocent civilians, isn't that terrorism?

CANTOR: Bob, I think the difference here is when there is a deliberate intent

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to kill innocent civilians, like this week when the Palestinian gunman went in and killed teenagers in a bar mitzvah, coming of age ceremony, for a young girl of 12 years old, the deliberate intentional killing of civilians is a terrorist act. The acts of Israel are in defense of those type of attacks.

PRESS: Mr. Rahman, I was an early supporter of Yasser Arafat, a long time supporter of Palestinian state. But don't we have to accept the reality that today, sadly perhaps, Yasser Arafat has no power, no influence, no juice, no control over his own territory. So for all practical purposes, we might just as well accept that he can't deliver any more and it's time to look for somebody who can.

**HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN**, CHIEF PALESTINIAN REP. TO U.S.: Before answering you, Bill, I have really to make comment on what the congressman just said. Yes, there are acts of violence committed by Palestinians. And we condemn those acts of violence because they are committed by individuals who are violating the positions of the PLO.

But when Israel kills Palestinians, it is kill -- those Palestinians are killed by the Israeli government and not by individual Israelis. So the terrorism on the Palestinian side is committed by individual Palestinians who are willing to commit suicide. But when Mr. Sharon sends his F-16 and Apache helicopters to attack Palestinian civilians and kill children, Mr. Congressman, that is an Israeli government policy.

We have individual terrorists, but Mr. Sharon represents an Israeli government that is engaged in acts of terror against Palestinian people. Are you willing to condemn those acts of violence by the Israeli government that result in the killing of Palestinian children in the same way that I'm willing to condemn acts of violence committed by Palestinian individuals?

CANTOR: The difference is, Mr. Rahman, is the acts by the Israeli government are in response to inaction by Mr. Arafat. Mr. Arafat has been put on notice, not only by the Israeli government, by the United States government to reign in the terror, to clamp down, to arrest the people that have been attacking and killing innocent citizens, women and children at this point. And he has failed to do so. So Israel has now no other choice. And they take pains when they go in to do that, to warn those civilians to get out of the way because Mr. Arafat has not incarcerated or arrested the terrorists under his control.

RAHMAN: But if you allow me, Mr. Cantor, when Mr. Sharon sends his F-16 to

attack Palestinian civilian areas, does those F-16 distinguish between who is a civilian and one who is not a civilian? Just let me finish. You have a number of children who have been killed by Israel under the age of 16. You have over 250 Palestinian kids who have been killed by Israeli attacks. Are those accidental? Are those accidental? Tell me.

CANTOR: Mr. Rahman, the point is...

RAHMAN: All those are deliberate attacks by the Israeli government.

CANTOR: There is no policy whatsoever that has ever been put into place by Mr. Arafat.

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RAHMAN: That's Israel tells you. Mr. Sharon is the only world leader today, who is being tried for war crimes in Belgium.

PRESS: Inherent in your argument is the fact that Yasser Arafat is not controlling his own people, is not controlling his own territory. So I just want to get an answer to my question.

RAHMAN: Yes, I will answer.

PRESS: Isn't he, in fact, out of power and therefore let's find somebody who can take charge?

RAHMAN: No, you know who is not allowing Mr. Arafat to succeed in his combat against violence is Mr. Sharon. You just said...

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: ...because he's under house arrest. How can...

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: He's under house arrest by Mr. Sharon. Isn't he? You just said that he is under house arrest.

CANTOR: Because he's not done what any civilized leader would do, which is to reign in the terrorist.

RAHMAN: Well, I would suggest you to not use those words about civilization because Mr. Sharon is not civilized and half of the Israeli republic and half of the world Mr. Sharon as a terrorist.

NOVAK: Mr. Cantor, I want to follow-up on what Mr. Rahman said.

CANTOR: Yes.

NOVAK: This is a draft of your bill. Should we call you, Mr. Secretary?

Have you become the Secretary of State that you're deciding who're going to give aid to? Let's just pass that over.

And what I wonder, do you know that there is a conscience effort by the Israeli government to chip away at Arafat's authority, to make had him a prisoner under house arrest? Then you say after chip away his authority, read the New York, just a minute let me finish the question. If you read "The New York Times", congressman, you know that they destroy Palestinian Authority police buildings. Then when he has no power, you say you can't control your extremists?

CANTOR: The Palestinian police are the ones who have been engaged in the terror. Just this week, there was uncovered in an apartment building, and you're talking about civilians areas, some of the largest bomb making facilities and equipment yet uncovered in the region. So Mr. Arafat has had chance after chance after chance.

NOVAK: Are you aware of the...

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CANTOR: To show his leadership and he has failed to do so.

NOVAK: Are you aware, sir, of the incident the other day where there were thousands of Palestinians demonstrating out, very physically demonstrating



against a Palestinian Authority police because they think the police have abandoned the people?

CANTOR: Well, we're talking about U.S. taxpayer support of a man and a regime that has refused to put his people first. Instead, has used any money or resources.

PRESS: Quick question.

RAHMAN: First of all, you do not give Yasser Arafat any money. You support certain projects carried on by American NGOs. If you want the schools, the...

NOVAK: Gentlemen, we're out of time. Thank you very Congressman Cantor, Mr. Rahman.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

NOVAK: Next up, shooting for gold. Is Utah about to host a pistol packing Olympics?

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

NOVAK: Welcome back to CROSSFIRE. People coming to Utah from all over the world for the Winter Olympics might think they're in the wild West. Concealed weapons are legal in Utah. And gun advocates want to make sure that guns can be carried into the Olympics. The Utah state government this year ordered all state offices, daycare centers, parks, hospitals and college campuses to remove gun bans on people licensed to carry concealed weapons. The University of Utah refuses. And they may go to court for a shoot-out, a legal shoot-out, of course.

We'll preview that legal struggle with Maura Carabello, director of the Gun Prevention Center of Utah and with Mark Shurtleff, attorney general of the state of Utah.

Bill Press.

PRESS: General, I have to tell you that from 2,000 miles away, it looks like the entire state of Utah has gone bonkers. I mean, first of all, you bribe people to get the Winter Olympics to Salt Lake City. Now you've got them for two weeks. You're going to be in the spotlight of the entire world. People coming from all over the world. You're spending about \$300 million for security. And you really want to allow people to carry concealed weapons to Olympic events? I mean, are you crazy?

MARK SHURTLEFF, UTAH ATTORNEY GENERAL: We're talking about the university, Bill. And it doesn't look like...

PRESS: No, we're not. We're talking about the Olympics, General. That's my question.

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SHURTLEFF: OK, well you need to do your homework then, because the legislature specifically said that the Olympic venues be will be completely gun-free. That's not a question. And nobody's arguing that point.

PRESS: Oh yes, sir, they are. Their gun owners are arguing that point. And in fact, I believe, you yourself are talking about that there should be lockers outside where those who have license to carry concealed weapon can come up to the event, put their gun in a locker and then go inside the event. There are gun owners suing the state of Utah to make sure that they can take their guns to gun owner events. Where do you come down? Do you support that or do you agree with me that it's totally crazy?

SHURTLEFF: Well, I have to say that your facts are wrong. That in fact nobody is suing, that this issues was discussed in the legislature in 1999. It was ruled that the Olympic venues would be gun-free. And (UNINTELLIGIBLE) has decided that there will not be gun lockers. Now there are some who are still trying to put up gun lockers, but right now, that will not happen.

PRESS: So you say no guns at Olympic events in the state of Utah.

SHURTLEFF: That's correct.

NOVAK: OK, but now we do have a situation, Miss Carabello, where there's a dispute over whether there should be guns in classrooms. And apparently, the University of Utah, some of the little delicate professors are worried that a kid brings in a gun. They don't like a professor with good reason, they may shoot him.

And I'd like to read you a defense of that, which fascinates me. "This academic freedom defense is really pathetic. They're saying if I disagree with someone they're afraid I'm going to shoot them. Well, guess what? There are small people who may be afraid of football players beating them up, but we don't ban the football players from the classroom." That's pretty good argument, isn't it?

MAURA CARABELLO, GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION CTR.: That's not a good argument. I mean, the man who said that is an activist here. I think what we're talking about is who has the right. And in the state of Utah, we've always argued that you know, local jurisdiction is the best jurisdiction. I feel very comfortable with the University of Utah, as well as other universities throughout the state, including BYU, to make decisions to keep their students safe.

And I think that they have a lot of legal merits. And I will say that they're willing to go to court on this and let the courts decide it. But regardless of how the courts decide, I'll say that the law needs to be changed. If it's interpreted incorrectly, I think that they have great legal foundations. Their foundations are both federal and state. There's -- we're in disagreement with the attorney general's interpretation of our state laws as well. And we fully support the University of Utah and believe they have the right to make those choices.

NOVAK: Well, Ms. Carabello, you use the word keeping the students safe. According to the statistics I see, with its concealed weapons law, Utah is the 12th safest state in the country. Now you may not know this, but right outside

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there is a jungle, right outside this studio. And we have in the District of Columbia the toughest gun law in the world.

If I put a gun, a pistol in my dresser drawer, it's against the law. And with that tough gun law in the District of Columbia, it tops in violent crime in the country, tops in property crime, tops in murder, tops in aggravated assault. Don't you think maybe concealed weapons keep people safer than the terrible gun control law in the District of Columbia?

CARABELLO: Well, I mean, I've heard of those black helicopters swooping down on us, getting us. But I will say that Utah is safe, that there's not been an incidence of weapons violations or violence on the University of Utah. And they've had this ban on concealed weapons for 25 years. There's never been an incident of that. I'm a woman and I feel completely comfortable walking around the University of Utah campus. And I feel safe. This is an environment of learning.

PRESS: General, I congratulate you on your wisdom about the Olympic Games. Let's see if we can take that one step further because under the present interpretation of the law, yours I believe, concealed weapons are allowed in daycare centers, in schools, in college classrooms. I mean, general, wouldn't you have to agree that the classroom of all places is one area that ought to be gun-free?

SHURTLEFF: I agree.

PRESS: Why would anybody need a gun in a classroom?

SHURTLEFF: I agree. Again, people -- I want to uphold the law. That's my job is to make people follow the law. The university is not beyond the law. Nobody is beyond the law. And but I would agree with you. I don't think guns ought to be in schools or churches. The problem is with your current law, you're letting the criminals carry weapons on campus because they don't obey the rules. That's what they do for a living is they disobey laws and policies. So the only people obeying it are the law abiding good citizens, who have never been a problem. The perfect example of this is what happened in the Appalachian School of Law just a few weeks ago, where you had a criminal shoot and kill people. The only reason why he was stopped is because the student who had a gun unfortunately out in their car, they had to go out and get it. And by the time they got it, he came out, ordered him to drop his weapon. Now maybe she could have saved lives had she had the gun in the classroom. So the problem is not with law abiding students. It's with the criminals.

CARABELLO: Let me take you what it takes to get a concealed carry permit in Utah. You have to be 21-years of age. You have to pass a course. Well, you don't have to pass a course. you have to take a course. You have to have one of your friends tell you're of good character. You can't beat your wife.

You can get a concealed carry permit without showing cause to the state of Utah. So the presumption that every person who has a concealed carry permit is a law abiding citizen doesn't fly. And we're talking about academic situations. We're talking about who has the right to choose who gets to carry what around.  
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Now let's be clear. Concealed carry in the state of Utah is a privilege that this state granted people in 1995. It's not a right.

PRESS: General, you just gave an example. I'm going to give you another one down here at the University of Virginia just last week, there's a student who got a bad grade. And he took out a gun and shot the dean. I mean, the idea, the more guns in the classroom, the more guns in the school, the more people are going to be shot with those guns. Why don't you show some leadership and say I don't care what the law says. Keep them out of daycare centers. Keep them out of grade schools and high schools and college campuses?

SHURTLEFF: I want to keep guns out of those places. I don't want criminals to bring them in. But right now, you're saying the University of Utah and other places that you just mentioned, criminals can bring them in there. And the example -- no, just a minute. You gave an example.

PRESS: OK. But the point I want to make is this guy was a law-abiding citizen. He wasn't a criminal.

SHURTLEFF: No, he wasn't.

PRESS: He was a law-abiding citizen.

SHURTLEFF: No.

PRESS: The guy in Virginia was.

SHURTLEFF: You're wrong.

PRESS: And he brought the gun in.

SHURTLEFF: No.

PRESS: He didn't break the law until he fired the gun.

SHURTLEFF: You're wrong. And it was a student who had a concealed weapon who stalked him. He was the criminal. And you -- I'll ask is that academia, educators who believe in facts do your homework and come and show us where there's one example of a concealed weapon permit holder. And Maura left out one important requirement. That is they have to have a background check. So they are law-abiding citizens. Never have those people brought forth their weapons.

PRESS: We're going to have to leave it there. Attorney General Shurtleff,

thanks very much for joining us. Maura Carabello, thank you for being there. We've talked about concealed weapons. Next, unconcealed weapons. Your e-mail. Yes, the moment you've been waiting for all week, when you get to fire back at me and Bob. Friday night fire back coming up.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

NOVAK: Welcome back. It's Friday "Fire Back." While viewers turned up at Bill and me in the CROSSFIRE with your e-mails. I'll go first.

Our first e-mail is from Andrea who writes, "I am ashamed of the inhumane

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treatment of prisoners. Is this part of the policy to win the hearts and minds of the Arabic world? Also, I'm tired of this dead or alive, good vs. evil."

Andrea, why don't you get real? Those prisoners down there are killers.

They're dangerous people. They're treated a lot better than any of the prisoners, most of the prisoners in this country. They're treated like kings.

They're treated better than our service personnel.

PRESS: Go Andrea. All right, Houston, this one's for me from Robert Jones who says, "Press should credit President Bush rather than attack him. Bush could have given special favors to a big contributor -- he did not Press simply applies guilt by association -- something he spoke out against during real scandals between 1992 and 2000."

NOVAK: Robert Jones.

PRESS: Robert Jones, I hate to pop your bubble, but in fact Enron did get a lot of special treatment. They got a lot of deregulation which enabled them to grow in Texas under Governor Bush. They were able to hand pick the chairman of the FERC. They had access to Dick Cheney, got 17 proposals in his energy plan. When California wanted help from Enron, the Bush administration sided with Enron and not with California. Hey, it goes on and on. Don't kid yourself. Enron is a real scandal, Mr. Jones.

NOVAK: Next e-mail's from Joe and Ida Mae Culler who write, "Bob Novak's politicizing criticism of Hillary Clinton is not appropriate. Republicans don't know how to adjust to a woman who is smarter than they are...than MOST men in fact; more faithful than the president and congressman who were condemning her; ahead of the masses on health care. Now, while the Republicans are trying to make Laura more Hillary-like is not a time to take shots."

Hillary is not smarter than I am and might be smarter than you, Joe and Ida Mae. And I'll tell you this, the Republicans are not trying to turn Laura into another Hillary, God forbid.

PRESS: This one, the man doesn't even have the guts to put his name here. He says, "Bill, SHAZAM!...I have found the perfect solution. Hang up the D%#@# phone. And I didn't need government help, how about that."

Yes, but the point is, I know, I can hang up the phone, too. I just don't want to get the phone calls in the first place. They're obnoxious. They're intrusive. They're an invasion of my privacy. They're almost as bad as having to listen to Bob Novak every night.

NOVAK: That hurts.

PRESS: From the left, I'm Bill Press. Have a good weekend. Good night from CROSSFIRE.

NOVAK: On the right, I'm Robert Novak. Join us again next time for another edition of CROSSFIRE. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT [www.fdcch.com](http://www.fdcch.com)

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CNN

SHOW: CNN LATE EDITION WITH WOLF BLITZER 12:00

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HEADLINE: Wolfowitz Discusses Military Operations; Lott Talks About Anti- Terrorism Measures; Biden, Hagel on Length of U.S.-Taliban War

GUESTS: Paul Wolfowitz, Sen. Trent Lott, Joseph Biden, Chuck Hagel, Alberto Gonzales, Ehud Olmert, Hassan Abdel Rahman, John Warden, Rudolph Giuliani, James Zogby

BYLINE: Wolf Blitzer, Steve Roberts, Susan Page, Jonah Goldberg, Wesley Clark

HIGHLIGHT:

Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz discusses U.S. military operations in Afghanistan. Then, Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott talks about the controversial anti-terrorism measures implemented by the White House. Finally, Democratic Delaware Senator Joe Biden and Nebraska Republican Senator Chuck Hagel discuss how long they believe the U.S. campaign against terror will last.

BODY:

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WOLF BLITZER, HOST: It's noon in Washington; 9:00 a.m. in Los Angeles; 7:00 p.m. in Jerusalem; and 9:30 p.m. in Kabul, Afghanistan. Wherever you're watching from around the world, thanks for joining us for this three-hour LATE EDITION.

We'll get to my interview with the U.S. deputy defense secretary, Paul Wolfowitz, shortly, but first, the latest developments in the war in Afghanistan.

(NEWSBREAK)

BLITZER: And earlier today I spoke with the U.S. deputy secretary of defense, Paul Wolfowitz, about the next steps in the war against terrorism both in and outside of Afghanistan.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

BLITZER: Secretary Wolfowitz, thank you very much for joining us on LATE EDITION.

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PAUL WOLFOWITZ, DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE: Good to be here.

BLITZER: The Taliban appears to be crushed in Afghanistan. What's the next mission, as far as the U.S. military is concerned, on the ground right now?

WOLFOWITZ: You know, every time I hear "appears to be," a little caution goes up. I mean, Kandahar still looks like a mess. There's still Taliban all over the country.

I think as an organized force they are crushed, I think that is a fair description. But there's a lot to be done.

And I think the most important thing for American people to understand is our objectives remain very largely to be done in future. We've got al Qaeda leadership we have to go after. We've got Taliban leadership we have to go after. We want to clear out all of the terrorists in Afghanistan, and that could take a while.

BLITZER: So what are the specific military targets, the danger points right now, where U.S. military personnel on the ground might be most at risk in this, what amounts to apparently, a cleaning-up operation.

WOLFOWITZ: Well, cleaning-up operations, as you know, can be very dangerous. Enemies that are half defeated can be very dangerous, and they can take a long time to clear out.

I'd be speculating, but I think the greatest danger we face is going into mountain passes and caves, and even a small force can do a lot to a larger force if they're ambushed or if you catch them at wrong time.

So we're going pursue these people aggressively. We've got to be careful.

The other constant problem to look out for and anticipate is to remember that the reason things moved so fast is because alliances shifted so rapidly against the Taliban. That's a measure, I believe, of how hated they were in Afghanistan, and it's a demonstration, if anyone needed a demonstration, that this was not a war against Afghanistan, it was actually a war that helped to liberate the Afghan people from a terrible tyranny.

BLITZER: Well, just as these alliance shifted one way, does that mean they could shift back another way very quickly?

WOLFOWITZ: Well, they could certainly shift. I don't think they'd shift back to what they were before. I don't think the Taliban will be resurrected. But yes, they could shift, we could find fighting between forces that were allied to one another before.

We really need to be prepared for the unexpected because this is a huge country; it's the size of the state of Texas. It's got terrain like Montana or British Columbia, and multiple different ethnic groups speaking different languages. People should appreciate just how complicated it is. And we still only have a few thousand troops in that whole area.

BLITZER: A few thousand troops on the ground in Afghanistan, the Marines in the southern part being the bulk of that.

Are you anticipating sending in more ground forces in the coming days and weeks?

WOLFOWITZ: We may send in some, but one of the principles on which we've conducted the campaign up until now has been to try to keep the American presence as low-profile as possible.

There's a lot of history there about foreigners who come in and, however they come in, they very quickly become regarded as a foreign presence. That happened to the British in the 19th century; it happened to the Soviets in the last century. It's happened to the Arab terrorists more recently.

We want to make it clear that we're there to get rid of the terrorists, we're there to help the Afghan people establish their own way of governing themselves and help to reconstruct the country, but we are not there to provide a permanent military occupation.



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BLITZER: The spiritual leader of the Taliban, Mullah Mohammed Omar, appears to be missing right now. Do you, meaning the U.S. government, have a sense where he might be?

WOLFOWITZ: We have a sense where he might be, but I hope people understand, when we say that, that that means there's a certain probability that he's in the area that we get the most reports about him from. If we had any kind of pinpoint, precise information, he wouldn't be there any longer, we would have captured him or killed him.

So, we're always working on reports that have a vagueness to them, some of them are contradictory. They tend to focus, in his case, around the area of Kandahar; in the case of bin Laden, around the area of Jalalabad. But they are not very precise, and it is possible, therefore, that they could be, the majority of them, dead wrong.

BLITZER: But you believe right now that Mullah Omar is still around the Kandahar area.

WOLFOWITZ: I believe he is most likely around the Kandahar area, but if he turned up somewhere else, I wouldn't be totally surprised.

BLITZER: And this notion of giving him amnesty -- Hamid Karzai, the interim leader of Afghanistan suggested that earlier in the week, although that apparently went away -- that is totally unacceptable to the U.S. government?

WOLFOWITZ: We made it clear it was totally unacceptable. And I think he has fallen off that position, if he ever held it for very long.

BLITZER: Is he a war criminal?

WOLFOWITZ: I don't want to start messing up some legal proceeding by passing prejudgments as an American official.

But we have made it clear that we hold the Taliban responsible for having harbored the organization that was responsible for the September 11 attack. So I think that sounds like a pretty serious set of facts.

BLITZER: Is the fact that Mullah Omar may be at large someplace in the Kandahar area -- I assume he's not alone, he's got some forces, some soldiers, protecting him with him -- that would be, obviously, an easy target if it's a sizable number.

WOLFOWITZ: Well, that is his dilemma after all. I mean, there's a huge price on his head. If he travels alone, some enterprising Afghan is liable to say, I want to collect that reward and round him up.

If he travels with a large number of bodyguards to protect him against that possibility, as you say, he makes a somewhat easier target to spot. We don't have to just look for an individual, we can look for something that looks like a convoy or a security detail.

BLITZER: The same holds for Osama bin Laden, who you say may be around the Jalalabad area, around Tora Bora, right?

WOLFOWITZ: Same dilemma. These are men now with big prices on their head, \$25 million in the case of bin Laden. And they're on the run, and I don't think they're going to be spending a lot of time thinking about how to conduct new terrorist acts.

BLITZER: What is your best information about how many troops Osama bin Laden, al Qaeda troops, he may have protecting him?

WOLFOWITZ: I think we'd be guessing pretty wildly, Wolf. I mean, there are still hundreds of al Qaeda people loose, but how many are actually with bin Laden, I don't think we have a very good idea.

BLITZER: Have you seen this videotape that the "Washington Post" reports about today, suggesting, in effect, a smoking gun, clear-cut evidence that Osama bin Laden was not only aware of the September 11 terrorist attacks, but was instrumental in plotting them?

WOLFOWITZ: You know, I don't know what it takes to convince some people. We had absolutely clear-cut evidence before that tape turned up.



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In this case we, yes, he's admitted on video that -- in fact, bragged and boasted about it. But he's bragged and boasted in ways that made it absolutely clear that he was responsible, not on private videos but on public videos. We've had evidence that we've presented to every friendly government in the world that makes absolutely clear the al Qaeda organization was responsible.

I mean, I hope people might quit with these wild conspiracy theories that suggest that someone else -- and you know they get pretty wild around the world. At some point, we'll have his own very clear direct words, and the world can see them.

BLITZER: When -- are you going to be releasing that videotape, in other words?

WOLFOWITZ: Well, that's not my decision to make. The question of when we might release it is something that we've got to consider, in light of the question of how we got it.

BLITZER: And are you going to tell us how you did get this videotape?

WOLFOWITZ: I'm not sure we do that sort of thing.

BLITZER: Because of the sensitivity?

WOLFOWITZ: It involves sources and methods of -- we obviously, if there is other videos to be acquired by the same means, we don't want to interfere with our ability to do that.

BLITZER: Will this operation be deemed a failure if Osama bin Laden remains at large?

WOLFOWITZ: I don't believe so. Look, I think the measure of this operation is our ability to eliminate the terrorist networks, and not just al Qaeda, and not just in Afghanistan.

And that's why the president has emphasized it's going to take a very long time. We could catch bin Laden tomorrow, and we still have months and years of work to be done.

And I suppose it is at least theoretically possible that he could take plastic surgery, disguise himself as a woman, and hide somewhere in the mountains of Chechnya, and it might be a long time before we find him.

Our goal -- obviously we'd like to get him, we want to bring him to justice, but the most important thing is to defend this country and to end the ability of those networks, including his network, to mount attacks against us.

BLITZER: Do you suspect there are still sleeper al Qaeda cells out there at large, even here in the United States, that could be triggered in the coming days or weeks to undertake another terrorist operation?

WOLFOWITZ: Obviously, if we knew with precision that, yes, there's a sleeper cell, it would be gone.

So we're talking about what do we think we don't know. I think we don't know about all of the people who were there. We didn't know about the September 11 terrorists before they struck.

So I think the only reasonable assumption, given what we know about the extent of this operation, is to assume there must be still some people out there.

BLITZER: And there's been a lot of speculation about potential capabilities of weapons of mass destruction, a report this past week about a so-called dirty radiation bomb.

Do you believe that the al Qaeda network has this kind of capability?

WOLFOWITZ: I haven't yet seen the kind of evidence that makes me convinced they have it. It's one of the things we look for hardest. I mean, our highest priority, in terms of intelligence collection in Afghanistan, is any evidence that would point to weapons of mass destruction in the hands of al Qaeda terrorists.

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And there are certainly indications that they've been exploring that kind of weaponry and would be interested in it. We haven't yet found the kind of firm link that would suggest this sort of dirty bomb is in their hands. They'd sure like to get it, there is no question about that.

BLITZER: I want to ask you a question about Hamid Karzai, the leader of the interim government that's going to be in place in Afghanistan. He says specifically about Mullah Omar, and he told this to the "Washington Post" on Friday, that Omar's fate is a question for Afghans; suggesting that maybe the Afghan people should decide Omar's fate, not the United States.

WOLFOWITZ: Well, we also think it is a question for Americans, and maybe we'll have to negotiate that with him.

I can understand. He's done enormous damage to Afghanistan and the Afghan people. He's also responsible for enormous damage to the United States. And when you have those kinds of issues between two countries, it's something you work out. I'm sure it will be worked out in a way that will bring justice to Mullah Omar one way or another.

BLITZER: The American who fought with the Taliban, John Walker, he is now in the custody of the United States. The Marines have him in southern Afghanistan. What should be his fate?

WOLFOWITZ: It certainly shouldn't be something that a U.S. official decides. It should be decided by an appropriate judicial procedure.

BLITZER: Is he cooperating with the United States now?

WOLFOWITZ: I don't know what his current status is. I know when he was first interviewed he told us quite a bit that was of some value. But I don't know his current status since he was moved to custody in Marines in Rhino.

BLITZER: His father says that he was just a misguided young kid who got himself into something he should never have gotten into.

I want you to listen to what Frank Lindh, his father, said earlier in the week.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

FRANK LINDH, JOHN WALKER'S FATHER: I think he used bad judgment in going to Afghanistan. But he is not a traitor; he is a good boy. He did not do anything against the United States. He went there to help the Taliban -- not a good choice -- but he did go to help the Taliban at a time when the United States was not involved.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: What do you say? You say he is providing some useful information, so that would seem to suggest he is coming around.

WOLFOWITZ: I wouldn't draw any conclusions. And I certainly wouldn't start to comment on his status when he is facing what could be a very serious judicial procedure of one kind or another.

BLITZER: The whole issue of friendly fire that came up this past week -- and three U.S. soldiers were killed, special operations forces. Have you undertaken any specific steps since then that could avert this kind of tragedy down the road?

WOLFOWITZ: We are always working very hard. It's one of the enormous, constant dangers of people in that situation.

There are some very stunning reports that came in from the special forces operating with General Dostum in the earlier stages of this battle where they were calling in airstrikes 50 meters from where they were located. I mean, these men go into harm's way, into great danger. They know there is always a danger that the strikes that are supposed to help may end up hitting them.

So, there is enormous effort that goes into trying, in the military terminology, to deconflict and make sure that we're hitting not our people but the other people.

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Now we're into a careful investigation to figure out whether it was the wrong coordinates or whether we missed coordinates we were supposed to hit and hit our own people. It is one of the tragedies, but one of the costs of doing business.

BLITZER: So the investigation continues?

WOLFOWITZ: It continues.

BLITZER: No conclusion yet?

WOLFOWITZ: No conclusion yet.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BLITZER: We have to take quick break, but there is much more of my interview with the deputy defense secretary, Paul Wolfowitz. Is Iraq the next U.S. target?

LATE EDITION will be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back to LATE EDITION.

And we return now to my conversation with the U.S. deputy defense secretary, Paul Wolfowitz.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

BLITZER: A group of lawmakers -- senators, House members, Democrats, Republicans -- wrote to president this past week about Iraq, and let me read an excerpt of what they said.

"For as long as Saddam Hussein is in power in Baghdad, he will seek to acquire weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. We have not doubt that these deadly weapons are intended for use against the United States and its allies. Consequently, we believe that we must directly confront Saddam sooner rather than later."

BLITZER: Good advice from Senators, among others, Lott, Lieberman, McCain, Helms, Shelby, Henry Hyde?

WOLFOWITZ: I think the president's happy to take advice from any quarter, and he -- in fact, he likes hearing different opinions. It's been my experience working with him that he is a decision-maker who relishes making decisions, which means he relishes people presenting the different points of view to him.

And he's made it clear from the beginning, from his address to the joint session of Congress, that this is a very ambitious campaign which is going to take a long time, to deal with all the global terrorist networks, and to end state support for terrorism.

But the exact tactics, the order in which you do things is something that you have to debate and then decide, and he's made decisions all along, I'm sure he will keep doing it well.

BLITZER: As you know, now is, it marks three years almost exactly since the U.N. weapons inspectors were kicked out of Iraq. The United States and much of the rest of the international community wants those weapons inspectors to go back in.

But Tariq Aziz, the deputy prime minister of Iraq, says that's not going to happen. I want you to listen to what he said earlier in the week.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

TARIQ AZIZ, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF IRAQ: They want to send inspectors, our flat answer is no, sorry. Why should we bring spies to Iraq, to spy on us, spy on our headquarters where we work, spy on our legitimate military activities in the country, because we are a sovereign nation?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

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BLITZER: It sounds like he's defying the United States and saying, no weapons inspectors.

WOLFOWITZ: You know, Iraq has an obligation, it was a condition of the end of the 1991 Gulf War, and incorporated in U.N. resolutions, they have an obligation to get rid of all of those weapons of mass destruction and to open the country up to inspection to verify that they've gotten rid of them.

To the best of our knowledge, they not only haven't gotten rid of them, they've built more of them. And, as you say, they've kept the inspectors out for three years.

BLITZER: And you haven't done anything about it for three years.

WOLFOWITZ: The president has made it clear that one of our concerns is the particularly dangerous combination of state support for terrorism combined with states that develop weapons of mass destruction, and he's made it clear the inspectors have got to go back into Iraq.

BLITZER: And what happens if they don't?

WOLFOWITZ: I think his phrase was, "Wait and see."

BLITZER: That sounds very ominous, but is it a hollow threat?

WOLFOWITZ: I don't think people should take this president lightly in anything that he says, and I think he's made that pretty clear by now.

BLITZER: You know, there are some critics -- and I know that there's been many reports that you're among the hawks in the administration, pushing for the targeting of Iraq, but critics say there is no smoking-gun evidence linking Iraq to the al Qaeda September 11 terrorist attack.

WOLFOWITZ: Look, let's start with the basic issue, which you started with here and which the president has highlighted, which is, this is a country that invaded its neighbor, after it was driven out of Kuwait, it undertook an obligation and an obligation was imposed on it to get rid of weapons of mass destruction, to allow inspectors. Let's at least get those inspectors back in and get rid of that capability.

BLITZER: So, even if there's no direct evidence to September 11, there's enough reason to target Iraq, in and of itself, because it's not cooperating with the 1991 cease-fire agreement?

WOLFOWITZ: Look, you're getting ahead of me with words like "target." There is no question that, independent of September 11, there is a serious problem with Iraq having expelled the inspectors and continuing to develop weapons of mass destruction.

BLITZER: I want to put up on the screen a comment that was written by Vincent Cannistraro (ph), a former CIA counter-terrorism official, writing in the "New York Times" last Monday.

He says this: "The anti-Iraq war party, outside and inside the Bush administration, is resurrecting the argument that Saddam Hussein's presumed accumulation of weapons of mass destruction poses an imminent threat. It is a dubious proposition, supported by little validated intelligence. Indeed, Iraq may be one of the least appropriate targets for the anti-terrorism campaign."

And he goes on to say there's no evidence saying that the Iraqis are targeting Americans.

WOLFOWITZ: I think it's very clear -- let's not get into the question of September 11 -- it is clear that Iraq is developing noxious, dangerous weapons.

And it's -- I don't know what he means by "imminent threat." I think one of the things we learned from September 11 is it's not so easy to predict exactly where threats will come from. But we do know that nuclear and biological and chemical weapons can do damage far beyond what we saw on September 11.

BLITZER: James Woolsey, the former CIA director, told me earlier in the week that he believes that there's some evidence that would link the Iraqis to the anthrax letters that were mailed here in the United States. Do you believe that?

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WOLFOWITZ: Unfortunately, I think we just don't know much about who's been mailing those letters, and that is itself a matter of great concern.

BLITZER: I want to ask your sense of what's happening in Israel right now, because, as you well remember, in January of 1991, at the start of the Gulf War, you and Larry Eagleburger, who was then the deputy secretary of state, went over to Israel to keep the Israelis on the sidelines, even though Scud missiles were being launched from Iraq into Israel.

If that were to happen again, in a hypothetical situation, and the Iraqis were targeted, they launched Scuds at Israel, would you want the Israelis to remain on the sidelines once again?

WOLFOWITZ: Wolf, you know I'm not going to speculate about something that is speculation built on speculation. I don't know what we're going to do, and I don't know what Iraq might do.

I do know that Israel did show extraordinary restraint 10 years ago.

But what we said to the Israelis at the time was, you don't need to get involved in this war; we're doing the job. And I think we did the job. I think it was pretty impressive.

BLITZER: Although, as you well know -- we're not going to get into this right now -- a lot of people say the job was never completed.

WOLFOWITZ: Our job was completed. The man still -- I think if anyone had known that he would still be around 10 years from now, having expelled weapons inspectors, making the kind of threats he does, maybe we would have done some things differently.

But our job was to get him out of Kuwait. And I believe his capability to attack even Israel is much reduced from what it was 10 years ago.

BLITZER: Here in the United States a lot of nervous parents out there who have kids serving in the U.S. military, either already there or on the way to there; reservists who have been activated.

When do you believe they'll be allowed to step down during in the course of this operation?

WOLFOWITZ: I wish I could give great reassurance.

What I can say instead is there's enormous courage and determination from extraordinary men and women that serve this country in uniform. They are brave, they're dedicated, they are making huge sacrifices. I think the country owes them an enormous debt.

But as the president said, this going to be a long fight, it's not just in Afghanistan. And we're going to be putting stress on our forces for sometime to come.

BLITZER: Secretary Wolfowitz, thanks for joining us.

WOLFOWITZ: Thank you.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BLITZER: When we return, the Senate Republican leader, Trent Lott. We'll ask him about controversial measures to fight terrorism here in the United States, and whether President Bush's proposals to stimulate the U.S. economy can survive Congress.

LATE EDITION will continue right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back to LATE EDITION.

We're joined now by the top Republican in the U.S. Senate, the minority leader, Trent Lott of Mississippi.

Senator, always good to have you on LATE EDITION.

SEN. TRENT LOTT (R-MS), MINORITY LEADER: Good to be back. Thank you, Wolf.

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BLITZER: Thank you.

In this war in Afghanistan, how important is it to find, capture Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar?

LOTT: I think that's very important. I mean, they are the head of the snake and you need to find them and cut it off, because if you don't, they'll move to some other location, some other country, and they'll continue to contribute to terrorism around the world.

They're both very dangerous, and we've got to get them and their whole al Qaeda organization and put an end to it.

But let me say, this is -- I think the president said very clearly from the beginning, this is not just about bin Laden and al Qaeda and Afghanistan. This is about global terrorism. And we've got to think of it in broader terms than just this one problem. And we need to work with our allies all over the world in dealing with it.

BLITZER: And so far, forget about domestic economic issues, other issues on the agenda as far as the war is concerned, are the Democrats the Republicans, pretty much on board, in the U.S. Senate?

LOTT: I don't think I have ever seen the country, beyond the Congress, more unified on any issue than they are on this issue.

I mean, we were hit hard in a way that really hurt us. What happened with the Trade Twin Towers, and of course the Pentagon.

So, regardless of party, region, philosophy or anything else, the country is united and I believe that the Congress has been cooperative with the president in this effort as we should be.

BLITZER: Are you at all sympathetic to John Walker, the American, the 20-year-old, who fought with the Taliban, is now under the control, custody of U.S. Marines?

LOTT: No, I'm not sympathetic to him at all.

Now, I don't know all details of how he got there, what he was doing there, who he is working with, what he knew, did he participate in any way, was he a witness to the American agent that was killed there, or to his execution.

The fact is, he was with a pretty hardcore group. He was in that prison, and he was down in the cellar with other hardcore Taliban people. And he was flooded out. You know, they put water down in there, as I understand it, and he kind of floated up with the rest of them. It looks very bad.

Now, we need to know exactly you know how to get there what he was doing, and he is entitled to, you know, certain rights. But, I think he is going to have to be tried, and, we'll find out exactly what he knew what he did in that process.

BLITZER: Based on what you know right now you would say he committed treason?

LOTT: It looks to me like he did. We may be in the technical sense, in view of, you know, we don't have a declared declaration of war, maybe not. But it was at least treasonous that with knowledge that Americans were involved and what happened there, if he continued to participate and with these people and in the things that they were doing, that is pretty treacherous and treasonous in my opinion.

BLITZER: You were among those lawmakers who wrote a highly publicized letter to President Bush this week saying Iraq should be the next target, sooner rather than later. That's a precise phrase that you used.

What do you mean, sooner rather than later? Days? Weeks? When you do want the U.S. to target Iraq?

LOTT: Well, as I said earlier, and I think I have heard this stated on CNN, that this is about terrorism wherever it is. And there are a lot of countries around the world where terrorism has been existing or has been harbored. We are going to have to look at what the next phase will be.



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I think it is important we don't get ahead of ourselves. I think it's important that we do the job in Afghanistan and in that region, follow up with humanitarian, and the cooperation with their new government. But we've got other work to do.

We have been advised to, you know, let revenge cool before we try to eat it. And so we better make sure we have the facts before we go to next step, whether it is Iraq or any place else.

But remember, the letter that I signed was a bipartisan letter. There were some very thoughtful people, including Senator Lieberman and Senator McCain. And Senator Helms has worked on this. We really were urging the administration to take advantage of an act we passed three years ago -- overwhelmingly bipartisan -- the Iraq Liberation Act in which we said here is the authority and the authorization of money to begin to help those in Iraq or outside of Iraq that would like to bring down Saddam Hussein and his tyrannical government and what are they doing to the people there.

Neither the Clinton administration and, so far, the Bush administration have been willing to take advantage of that. We should have learned a lesson from what we learned in Afghanistan.

Not too long ago people were saying oh, these Afghanis, the Northern Alliance, the rest of them, they referred to them as Gucci, you know, revolutionaries. Gucci is a jeans (ph) -- and armchair generals. And we found out, well, they would fight.

And I think maybe that there are some forces outside of Iraq and inside Iraq that would like an opportunity to have some support to begin to move toward a different time in that country.

BLITZER: So, what you're saying is that the model that the U.S. has used in overthrowing the Taliban in Afghanistan, working with opposition forces, the Northern Alliance and others, could be used to overthrow Saddam Hussein in Iraq?

LOTT: Shouldn't we at least give it a chance? Shouldn't we be supportive of those that want freedom and opportunity and peace for the people of Iraq? I think we should try that -- and a lot of other things, too.

BLITZER: But you don't have any hard evidence directly linking the Iraqis to the September 11 attacks?

LOTT: I don't, but there may be evidence that I wouldn't be aware of. We do know that there is very strong evidence that one of the hijackers, Atta...

BLITZER: Mohammed Atta.

LOTT: ... met with some Iraqi officials I think more than once. Now, that is pretty interesting in and of itself.

BLITZER: And that is enough for you to raise your concerns?

LOTT: Yes, it is.

BLITZER: Let's talk a little bit about the military tribunals that the Bush administration wants to use to conduct trials in secret against suspected terrorists.

Not only Democrats, some Democrats, but there are even some Republicans who have expressed some concern, want to take a closer look at this -- Bob Barr of Georgia, for example.

Jeff Sessions said this at the Judiciary Committee hearing, the Republican from Alabama, senator: "And just as history judged the ally power by how they conducted the Nuremberg trials, so history will judge America for how we conduct the trials of these terrorists. We do not want history to conclude that America, through these military commissions, rendered victors justice, but real justice."

LOTT: Well, I think that's a very thoughtful statement.

I think there's room to ask questions and make sure how this works and who it would apply to. And there are civil libertarians and libertarians that are concerned about it.



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But I have confidence in this president and in John Ashcroft for this to be done in the right way -- not used against American citizens, but these are terrorists that have been involved in acts of war that are not U.S. citizens. And there are some people that infer that it's OK for our military men and women to be tried in this way, but not a terrorist that has participated in, you know, taking, you know, helpless, innocent lives.

So, I think this is a vehicle that can be considered. It can be used appropriately, and I believe that it will be. And that's the only way it will be done.

BLITZER: So you're not concerned, you don't think that Congress should write legislation specifically authorizing the parameters of how these military commissions should operate?

LOTT: I believe that they have the authority under existing law to do what they have done and what they are prepared to do.

BLITZER: So you disagree with Senator Leahy on that.

LOTT: I do disagree with Senator Leahy and with Bob Barr, by the way, very aggressively.

BLITZER: All right.

LOTT: I think this is a good, good idea of how to proceed.

BLITZER: It's been three months since the September 11, almost exactly three months, since the September 11 attacks. There was talk of an economic stimulus package to help revive the U.S. economy which was in trouble even before. Still no package.

The Democrats blame you -- not necessarily you personally -- but the Republicans for loading up this package with all sorts of tax breaks for big corporations that are just going to cost the U.S. taxpayer a lot of money.

LOTT: Well, here we go. You know, for two and a half months we did everything in a very bipartisan way.

But unfortunately the Senate is becoming a black hole of inactivity. When you look at what's not being done -- the education reform package, the president's, by the way, highest domestic priority, it passed the House of Representatives 198 days ago. It's been in the Senate and in the conference ever since. We still have no agreement.

Energy legislation, the stimulus package in particular. What happened in the Senate is they made it partisan, and we've told them in the Finance Committee, let's don't do that. That's not the way the Finance Committee works. Let's work together. They turned it into a spending package. Then when they got to the floor, they seemed to be surprised they couldn't move it.

The Senate has not acted, and now they're trying to say it's the Republicans fault.

But, look, let's stop that. The people want action. You know, the approval ratings of Congress have been very high because we've been working together trying to do the right thing for America.

BLITZER: Will there be a stimulus package before Christmas?

LOTT: I think there should be one before Christmas. I think the president should ask for it. I think that the leaders should demand it. I think we should give the negotiators a deadline and say, this is important for the economy and for the working Americans of this country and for those that have lost their jobs, to help them.

And we could do it next week. We absolutely should do it. Let's quit pointing fingers, let's get down to business.

BLITZER: So, bipartisanship on the domestic homefront, these kinds of issues, has it gone away?

LOTT: Well, it's in serious jeopardy, and in the Senate it certainly has been taking a beating. Although last week the Senate once again did the right thing, passed a defense appropriations bill that can

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provide for the needs of our military men and women, without it just becoming a big spending program for all kinds of programs where the justification had not been proved.

BLITZER: The president came in, as you pointed out, saying education was his top priority. He can't even get that through though.

LOTT: And the interesting thing to me is that the Republicans, House and Senate, and Senator Kennedy, are saying we're ready to get this done, and yet there are a few members of the Senate -- apparently Senator Daschle, Senator Harkin, Senator Clinton, Senator Jeffords -- who are saying, well, no we got to have even more money and by the way, some of these programs must be mandatory; that you provide the funding no matter what you have available.

And I think they've come to a point where they have an agreement. If we could end this next week and get an educational reform package done and get an economic stimulus package done and complete our work of defense appropriations, we could go home and say, in spite of it being tough, we've done the right thing for America and we've done it in a bipartisan way.

BLITZER: Let's see if that happens.

LOTT: I hope it does.

BLITZER: Senator Lott, thanks for joining us.

LOTT: Thanks, Wolf.

BLITZER: Thank you.

And just ahead, with the Taliban less of an obstacle, U.S. forces are intensifying the search for Osama bin Laden. Is the military campaign in Afghanistan nearly over? We'll ask two of Senator Lott's colleagues, Democrat Joe Biden, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and Republican Chuck Hagel, a key member.

LATE EDITION will be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GEN. TOMMY FRANKS, CENTRAL COMMAND: And I don't think I would say that Mullah Omar has vanished. I think we have said all along, I think the president has said, that we'll either bring him to justice or bring justice to him.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: U.S. General Tommy Franks, the head of the Central Command, commenting on the search for the Taliban spiritual leader, Mullah Mohammed Omar.

Welcome back to LATE EDITION.

Joining us now to talk about the war effort abroad as well as here in the United States are two members of the U.S. Senate: in Wilmington, Delaware, the Democratic Senator Joe Biden. He is chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. And here in Washington, Nebraska Republican Senator Chuck Hagel. He's also a member of the Foreign Relations Committee.

Senators, welcome to LATE EDITION.

Senator Biden, let me begin with you. A lot of debate whether it's better for the United States to capture, as opposed to kill, Osama bin Laden. But as of right now, he is still on the loose. What's your sense? Is the U.S. going to find this guy?

SEN. JOSEPH BIDEN (D), DELEWARE: I think we will find him, Wolf. I think we have to be patient. You and I talked about this right at the beginning of the war. And just as we have to be patient about taking down the Taliban, and it went faster than we thought, I think we have to be a little patient about this.

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I know we all, you know, want this to happen quickly, but I think it will happen no matter what. If it takes another day, another week, a month, another five years, we are going to get this son of a gun.

My preference would be to kill him unless he is crawling out of a cave waving a white flag surrendering, in which case we would honor that. But I think that is best way to do it. And I think we will do it. I think we will find this guy.

BLITZER: Senator Hagel, what's your preference?

SEN. CHUCK HAGEL (R), NEBRASKA: I think Joe said it exactly right. We will get him. And I think it would be in the best interests for all of us if this guy went down with this cause.

BLITZER: You want him to be a martyr in other words?

HAGEL: Well, I don't think you have anything to say about that. Whether you put him on trial, whether you kill him, whatever the outcome is, he is going to be glorified by that crowd. And there is not much you can do about that. But the fact is we will get him.

And I think the other pieces of this that need to be played out as administration is, is where do we go from here? And what are the consequences and the things that are happening now, in trying to put together a coalition government. The successes that we had in Bonn, Germany, last week, those are the next steps that we need to start thinking through.

BLITZER: Senator Biden, go ahead. I know you want to say something.

BIDEN: I agree they are the next steps. I fully agree with Chuck. But one of the reasons I keep focusing on Omar and also on bin Laden is, the world has to know we have the absolute total resolve, no matter what it takes, to find somebody who is responsible for such a heinous crime, it does not matter how long it takes. I would be satisfied if we got this guy in 15 years, but we must make it clear, that no matter what, no president, no government of the United States will rest until this man is dead.

BLITZER: Senator Biden, do you think that videotape that Paul Wolfowitz spoke about on this program, the vice president spoke about earlier on Meet the Press, the videotape that the U.S. now has of Osama bin Laden talking about the whole September 11 operation, the so-called smoking gun, in the most specific terms, should the administration make that tape public?

BIDEN: Well, I've not seen the tape. But I think it should be made public. Whether they should make it public or have venue in which it is public so it has more credibility in the eyes of people who want to have a positive view of this guy, remains to be seen. I have not seen the tape.

But I do think one of the things that is happening, Wolf, is that it is seeping in throughout the world the nature of who bin Laden is, the nature of the people around him. And I think, as every day goes by, his cause, his case, his adherence diminish. And I think this tape would help further that cause.

BLITZER: What about you, Senator Hagel? Do you want the White House to release that tape?

HAGEL: Oh, I think it is in the interest of this country. And as Joe stated, it allows the world to see exactly what we are dealing with.

I said on your show weeks ago, Wolf, when we talked about some of these dynamics whether we should share information with our allies, with the world, make it public. Absolutely. The world needs to see this, and exactly for the reasons that Joe said and others, when we talk tribunals or anything else.

We need to understand here what we are up against, first, as a nation, and the world needs to understand that the threat, the borderless threat that these people present to mankind.

BLITZER: Senator Biden, Secretary Wolfowitz said that the situation in Afghanistan right now remains very chaotic. How long should U.S. military personnel remain in Afghanistan?

BIDEN: I think they should remain as long as it takes.

And I might add, I think Paul Wolfowitz -- I watched the whole segment -- was measured, reasoned, and there was not anything he said I disagree with. And I mean that sincerely.

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One of the things that Paul has been pointing out for a long time is, the hard part now really begins.

Everybody talks about phase two, I'm forgetting Saddam and eliminating him in Iraq, but the problem is we have another couple phases in Afghanistan, not only getting al Qaeda wiped out and bin Laden and Omar, et cetera, but making sure this government is able to be sustained.

And this new government is a transition government, Wolf, and I believe they're going to need military force in place, preferably, preferably, not U.S. military force, the bulk of it. Now we have our German friends, our French friends, our Turkish friends, all willing to put troops on the ground.

And I think it's pretty important we get in Mazar, as well as in Kabul, the security force in place that allows food to flow to save people's lives, coming through Mazar and across the Friendship Bridge, and stability in the capital, allowing this new transition government, made up of people who were warring factions before, to have the certainty that they can begin to put in place rudimentary elements of government.

And I think the U.S. is going to have to lead that. We don't have to be the predominant force, by any stretch of imagination now.

BLITZER: Senator Hagel, do you trust Hamid Karzai, the interim leader who's nominally now in charge of Afghanistan?

HAGEL: Well, I think, like always in foreign relations, you play with the cards you're dealt. I think, of all the options that we had for leadership of this new 30-member coalition government to come together, he is probably the best, for many reasons.

I think he can and does represent an enlargement of many factions that can come together, eventually, to secure some sustainable government and represent all the issues and the groups in Afghanistan.

So overall, I think he was the best choice. It's never a 100 percent versus a zero percent kind of a choice here.

We're going to have to continue to be part of this, just as Joe said, and we need to do that and be wise in how we help and are part of that and assist, and not project any kind of an image that somehow we are imposing a government on anybody. We are not doing that.

BLITZER: All right. Senators, stand by. We have to take a quick break. We have a lot more to talk about.

Coming up, the second hour of LATE EDITION, more of our conversation with Senators Biden and Hagel. I'll ask them about Iraq. Should it be the next target?

Then, the White House counsel, Alberto Gonzales, defends new and very controversial efforts to locate and try terrorists here in the United States.

We'll also go live to Israel, where a VIP New York delegation is visiting, including the New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani. We'll speak to him.

Plus our LATE EDITION roundtable.

It's all ahead in the next hour of LATE EDITION.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back to LATE EDITION. We'll continue our conversation with Senators Chuck Hagel and Joe Biden in just a moment. Later in the hour, we'll also speak with the New York mayor, Rudy Giuliani, live from Jerusalem.

But first, here is CNN's Catherine Callaway in Atlanta with a quick check of the latest developments.

(NEWSBREAK)

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BLITZER: And we'll continue our conversation now with Delaware Democratic Senator Joe Biden, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and the Nebraska Republican, Senator Chuck Hagel, a key member of that very same committee.

Senator Biden, that famous letter that some lawmakers sent up to the president this week, saying Iraq in effect should be the next target, sooner rather than later, were you asked to sign that letter?

BIDEN: No, I wasn't.

But as chairman of the committee, I think there's an institutional responsibility, if you want to ask the president something, to pick up the phone and call him.

I once remember Jim Eastland, the former chairman of another committee, saying, "Don't ever send a chairman a letter he doesn't want to receive."

I think my obligation and responsibility is to cooperate with the president.

But the thrust of the letter, I don't disagree with. I think that -- and I don't think you have to convince the president of that -- Osama bin Laden is the guy we're after now, but the truth of the matter is, the idea that you're going to have the fellow in charge of Iraq five years later still being in charge of Iraq and us having terrorism under control is not likely.

So it's just a matter of time, and how.

BLITZER: Senator Hagel, you were asked to sign that letter and decided not to.

HAGEL: Well, I wasn't asked to sign the letter. I was told about the letter. And I did not pursue it, because I'm not sure that's the most appropriate, thoughtful way to approach this.

The grasp of the obvious is obvious: Iraq's a bad player; Saddam Hussein, specifically, is a bad player. We are going to have to deal with him.

But I think we must be very careful here. It seems to me we don't want to do anything that would precipitate undoing the great successes we've had here...

(CROSSTALK)

HAGEL: ... and much of that as a result of a coalition that we have put together. We will deal with him.

Second, as far as I can tell, there is no alternative to Saddam Hussein. There's no opposition, there's no Northern Alliance-type organization there. I think we're kidding ourselves if we believe there is.

We don't want to set in motion unintended consequences that could have devastating effects here throughout the Muslim world, Arab world. I think it could reach as far down to the Strait of Malacca in Indonesia, where you have 200 million Muslims. So I think we have to be a little careful how we pursue this.

And it's not a question of whether Saddam's a good guy or whether we leave him alone. He's not a good guy, we are going to deal with him, but it should be on our terms, our timetable and with the coalition.

BLITZER: Senator Biden, a lot of people have not necessarily paid much attention, in this whole aftermath of September 11, to Iran. Some commentators, though, have pointed out the Iranians are playing a pretty good role right now, as far as the U.S. is concerned. Others have said Iran is a more formidable terrorist threat to the United States than even Iraq.

What's your reading of where the Iranians stand right now?

BIDEN: Well, I think where they are is, they are split between their civil and religious leadership. You have Khamenei, who is the religious side of the equation, and Khatami, who is the civil side. And, quite frankly, they're at odds, and there is an internal struggle. Whether it's a literal struggle or not, there is a political struggle for power.

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And just for example, Khamenei came out of prayers on Friday and said to all those assembled in his mosque that, you know, the United States was killing, this was a war against Islam. Yet you had Khatami saying, no, this is a war against Afghanistan, and even agreeing to get downed American pilots if they were downed in western Afghanistan.

So, there's a real split there. There's an opening, but it is too soon to tell.

Stated overall, Wolf, if Iran went totally "bad," quote unquote, that is, there was no chance of the modification of their present policies, they are, sum total, a worse danger, a more powerful nation, more capable of doing harm to us than Iraq is.

But they're not there yet. It's a question which way they turn, and I think that relates to this internal struggle going on between the religious leadership and the civil leadership.

BLITZER: Senator Hagel, let me ask about John Walker, the American Taliban fighter. You're a veteran of the Vietnam War, highly decorated.

Newsweek has a new poll that just came out today. Let me read to you the question, what should happen to John Walker? Should he be charged and tried? 41 percent said yes. Charged and tried only if there was evidence, 40 percent. Released, not charged, 3 percent. Don't know, 16 percent.

What's your take? What should happen to this American Taliban fighter?

HAGEL: Well, first of all, we have to be a little careful here. No question he was in the wrong place at the wrong time, with the wrong people. And why he was there, the motive behind that, we need to let that play out. We need to talk with him, as we are talking to him.

I'm not one who is going to immediately charge him with treason. And the fact is he was found fighting against Americans forces. What did he understand, what he didn't?

I think we have to be a little careful here. I would give him some margin of error. But the fact is he was where he was, and that is a -- that's a very disturbing factor. This guy is 20 years old. I don't think he's stupid. I think he's mature, informed.

And we'll let this play out. But I think we need a little more information.

BLITZER: Senator Biden, do you have any sympathy for this 20- year-old?

BIDEN: No.

But I tell you what, I think Chuck stated it correctly. The measure for me will be how much he cooperates.

If faced with the fact and the knowledge what happened on 9-11 or faced with the fact and knowledge of what's going on because, theoretically, maybe he didn't know that, arguably, well, faced with that, if he doesn't fully cooperate and, in effect, diagram every cave he was ever in and every person he ever has worked with and fully, totally, 100 percent cooperate, then that goes, in my mind, it goes to his original motive and whether or not he was seeking to do damage to the interests of the United States.

And I just don't have enough facts to know that. And I think we should find that out first.

There are grounds upon which he could be tried, including seditious conspiracy and foreign murder of a United States citizen, as well as treason if -- if the facts lead in that direction, but I don't have enough information to know that.

BLITZER: Senator Biden, while I have you over here, let me ask you about these military tribunals, some of the controversial measures the attorney general, John Ashcroft, has undertaken to deal with suspected terrorist detainees, what some are calling profiling.

He was testifying on the Hill earlier in the week. I want you to listen specifically, a short soundbite, what he said in terms of his willingness to cooperate with the U.S. Congress.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)



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JOHN ASHCROFT, ATTORNEY GENERAL: In some areas, however, I cannot and will not consult with you.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: Sounds like, I mean, I guess, some have interpreted that as an almost defiant attorney general.

BIDEN: I don't know who died and left him boss, as my grandfather used to say. There's a Constitution. We are an equal branch of government. He has to cooperate with us. He has no choice.

Look, I have more concern about the way in which John is beginning to phrase this debate, particularly the part where he talked about anybody, basically -- I'm paraphrasing -- anybody who questions these issues and was giving, you know, comfort to terrorists. I mean, I hope we don't go there. I hope we don't get in this place.

BLITZER: Well, let me interrupt you for a second, Senator Biden.

What he later clarified through a spokeswoman, saying that he only meant those who are misinterpreting, who are misleading the American public about what his intentions are, what these steps are, they are the ones who are giving aid and comfort to the...

BIDEN: Well, who are they? I mean, who are they? You know, this is the -- I mean, we shouldn't do this. We have a united country now. We shouldn't get into this -- this kind of diatribe. That's a little bit like you had me on your program a lot during the war in Kosovo, Wolf. And you remember there were Republicans -- not your other guests -- Republicans out there saying that, you know, this is -- we're going after innocent people and, you know, what we're going to do is get ourselves in trouble and we don't want to do that.

How about if I had said, "Anyone who at this moment questions the utility of bombing is giving aid and comfort to Slobodan Milosevic"? That would be have been preposterous. It's preposterous to use that kind of terminology, period.

With regard to whether or not we have the authority to set up these tribunals, I teach constitutional law -- doesn't mean I'm an expert. I teach it, and I also have, for years, headed up that committee in the United States Congress.

And it's simple to me. One -- probably there is a constitutional authority to be able to try anyone involved with 9-11 in a military tribunal.

Now, that -- there used to be a famous conservative scholar named Philip Kerwin (ph) from the University of Chicago. And one day, sitting on my side porch preparing for a Supreme Court hearing, I said, "But that's constitutional, Professor." And he looked at me and said, "Joe, remember, everything that's constitutional is not necessarily wise."

If we use these courts, even if they're constitutional, which I think they probably are, and we don't get al Qaeda members who are caught in Spain returned to the United States for trial and they're let go in Spain, what have we gained?

And so, this is a real tough call. I think it's worth being discussed.

BLITZER: Let me ask Chuck -- Senator Hagel. You got 30 seconds. What's your sense?

HAGEL: Well, first of all, are we at war or are we not at war? I think we tend to drift from that question. Of course we're at war, or least most of us believe we are.

If that is the case, then we are going to have to adjust some of the dynamics, if not many and most of the dynamics, of law enforcement, of judicial procedure.

Is John Ashcroft within the boundaries of the Constitution? I think he is. Is he working within the powers the Congress has given him? I think he is. Could we sand off some of the rough edges in how he's doing it? Maybe so.



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But I think Zell Miller, the Democratic senator from Georgia, said right when he said, let's quit nit-picking here and let's deal with reality.

Nobody has proposed taking civil liberties or rights away from anybody, but let's bring some thoughtful common sense to this.

BLITZER: We have to leave it right there.

Senator Hagel, Senator Biden, thanks to both of you for joining us.

BIDEN: Thanks.

Thanks, Chuck.

BLITZER: As usual, a good discussion.

And just ahead, if Osama bin Laden and other al Qaeda members are eventually found, should they be brought to justice in the United States, and under what circumstances? We'll discuss that and other new anti-terrorism efforts with the White House counsel, Alberto Gonzales.

LATE EDITION will continue right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back to LATE EDITION.

Critics of the White House claim people's constitutional rights are being sacrificed to the fight against terrorism.

Earlier today I spoke with the White House Counsel Alberto Gonzales about the debate over security versus civil liberties.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

BLITZER: Mr. Gonzales, welcome to LATE EDITION. Good to have you on the program. Hopefully the first of many times that you will be on this program.

ALBERTO GONZALES, CHIEF WHITE HOUSE COUNSEL: Wolf, thank you for inviting me.

BLITZER: You know there's a lot of controversy surrounding several of the measures the attorney general, the Bush administration have proposed -- military tribunals, listening in on conversations between attorneys and their clients, rounding up all sorts of suspects.

The general question is this: Is it going too far, as far as trampling on constitutional rights?

GONZALES: It is not going too far in terms of trampling on constitutional rights, Wolf.

We are in an extraordinary time. And the president believes that in these times it is appropriate to look at every possible legal option to ensure that he is able to protect this country and the lives of American citizens.

I think a lot of the confusion, really, stems from the fact that people are not educated about the limits and scopes of some of the measures that the administration is considering. And I think that once we get out to the public and talk about the measures that we are considering implementing, I think people are a lot more comfortable about what we are doing if they understand the need for the things we are considering.

BLITZER: All right, well, this an opportunity for you to clear up some of these misperceptions.

GONZALES: It sure is.

BLITZER: Specifically, the military tribunals. These will involve non-U.S. citizens. No U.S. citizens will be tried in secret before these military tribunals, is that right?

Well, the ordinance specifically provides that it does not apply to U.S. citizens.

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And the notion that we are going to have mass secret trials is just a wrong presumption. There is nothing in the order that requires that these proceedings occur in secret. There will be instances, when, for national security reasons, the president may feel it is appropriate that a proceeding or portions of a proceeding be secret. But the objective here is not to have mass secret trials.

BLITZER: But, you could have done that, had secret evidence in order not to compromise national security sources and methods, you could have done that without going to a full-scale military tribunal, couldn't you?

GONZALES: There is a provision under current law, CIPA, Classified Information Protection Act, which does provide a mechanism for introducing classified information in a civilian trial. It is extremely cumbersome, extremely burdensome. It doesn't always work well.

As an example, in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, one of the bits of information that came out of that was the method of communication by bin Laden. And as a result of that publication of how he communicates, he stopped using that source of communication.

So, you're right. There is a procedure in place now, but it's not always very effective.

BLITZER: How many people presumably, the Taliban soldiers who have been picked up, who have been arrested, al Qaeda members who may or may not be brought to Guam or Samoa or board U.S. aircraft carrier at the Naval base at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, how many of these individuals presumably could be tried with these military tribunals?

GONZALES: Well, it's hard to say, Wolf, because the order is drafted in a way that requires the personal involvement of the president of the United States. He will have to make a decision that it is in the best interests of United States that a person be subject to the jurisdiction of a military commission. So, the only person who can really answer that question is the president of the United States.

BLITZER: But all these various locations that I mentioned, are they under consideration for these military proceedings?

GONZALES: There are a variety of locations being considered for military proceedings. I don't think it's appropriate for me to comment as to the specific locations at this time.

BLITZER: Another very controversial measure that the administration has adopted is inviting, that is the word you used, some 5,000 individuals here on various visas, some illegal, some not so illegal, to come in and provide information about what they know about suspected terrorist operations.

The suggestion is that this goes too far in terms of, in effect, profiling, because almost all of them are of Middle Eastern ancestry.

GONZALES: There has been some accusation that this looks like racial profiling. The list was not based upon a person's race, it was based upon other factors and therefore, in my judgment, cannot be characterized as racial profiling.

BLITZER: Ethnic profiling?

GONZALES: Well, again, it was based upon -- the country of origin was the primary source of the list. You looked at age groups and country of origin in terms of making this list.

Let me make a point about this. These folks are guests of the United States. We expect of American citizens to cooperate with law enforcement authorities. If they know the information, we expect our citizens to come forward and be cooperative and help law enforcement authorities solve crimes.

It is not too much to expect of our guests to do the same. And that is all that is being done here. These are purely voluntary. These are conducted, I believe, in a person's home. Police officers come to the person's home and ask for their cooperation. If they choose not to cooperate, that is something they can decide to do.

But it is something that we expect of our guests, as we expect of our citizens.

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BLITZER: As you well know, during the campaign last year, the president was widely applauded by Arab Americans, Muslim Americans for what he said during one of the debates. I want you to listen to what the president, then the candidate, said on October 11 of last year.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: There is other forms of racial profiling that goes on in America. Arab Americans are racially profiled in what's called secret evidence. People are stopped. And we've got to do something about that.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: It sounds, though, that that is what he is precisely doing right now. Based on some secret evidence, going around and inviting Arab-Americans to come in and cooperate.

GONZALES: Well, you have to remember these folks that are being asked questions are not targets of any investigation. We simply hope and believe that they may have information about other terrorist activities.

And the administration is very concerned, obviously, about everyone's civil liberties. But we are also concerned about protecting the citizens of this country, and we're working very hard to ensure that we achieve a proper balance during these times.

BLITZER: You were a highly respected judge in Texas, one of the reasons why the president asked you to come to Washington. You may eventually wind up on the Supreme Court, for all we know.

How concerned are you about the violation of the traditional attorney-client privilege when the attorney general says that some conversations between people picked up and their attorneys will, in fact, be recorded?

GONZALES: Well, we have to remember, what is a true baseline here? People assume that the baseline is that all communications between the attorney and the client are sacred.

But that's just not true. Prisoners do not have an absolute right to privacy. We screen mail, for example. We do monitor who they visit with.

So it's wrong to assume that there is an absolute right to privacy.

And, obviously, there are privileges that do come into play, but even the attorney-client privilege is not absolute. For example, if an attorney's made aware that a client is about to commit a crime, in most jurisdictions, the attorney has an obligation to violate that privilege in that case.

And so, the baseline is not that all communication between an attorney and client is absolutely privileged.

BLITZER: So you don't -- so that attorney-client privilege is not sacrosanct, as far as you're concerned?

GONZALES: As far as I'm concerned, you have to look at the circumstances to make a determination whether or not there's been an abuse of that privilege.

BLITZER: Some of the critics of the administration's policies, like the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator Leahy, have suggested, why not get congressional authorization formally for these various steps that have been so controversial, instead of just doing it by executive order.

Listen to what Senator Leahy said earlier in the week.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SEN. PATRICK LEAHY (D), VERMONT: We can be both tough on terrorists and true to the Constitution. It is not an either/or choice.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

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BLITZER: He also went on to say, if you have congressional framework -- a congressional framework, congressional approval, a lot of the questions being asked would stop.

Why not invite Congress to go ahead and formally authorize these steps?

GONZALES: Because in any cases we do not believe that the congressional authorization is really necessary. It is an open question, in many areas, as to whether or not congressional authorization is necessary.

I understand from the hearings that some expressed perhaps some doubts that the administration can take these kinds of actions without congressional authorization.

And I would just remind the American people that there was no doubt in the minds of the eight justices in a unanimous decision in the Quirin case back in 1942 that the president of United States had the authority to do this. And that was reaffirmed four years later by the Supreme Court.

There was no doubt in the mind of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt that the president of the United States has the authority, on his own, as commander in chief, to take these kinds of actions.

BLITZER: So what you're saying is, if there was congressional authorization, that could diminish the authority of the president?

GONZALES: Well, obviously, we would have to look at that, but we view the source of the president's power as the Constitution and not statute.

BLITZER: Another issue came up during the congressional hearings, the Judiciary Committee hearings, was the whole notion of the impact of the gun control legislation, the instant background checks.

As you know, terrorists, suspected terrorists, have been briefed on where to go ahead at gun shows, for example, and buy weapons in the United States that they could presumably use against Americans.

But, as you know, the attorney general says that they're not going to allow the FBI, at least for the time being, to use these gun records, instant background checks, because of the existing law, in effect.

Senator Schumer was very outraged by this. Listen to what Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, a member of the Judiciary Committee, said.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SEN. CHARLES SCHUMER (D), NEW YORK: When it comes to the area of even illegal immigrants getting guns and finding out if they did, this administration becomes weak as a wet noodle.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: The suggestion being that you're still being influenced by the NRA, the National Rifle Association, and other gun advocates, even when terrorists, suspected terrorists obtaining guns in the United States are concerned.

GONZALES: But it's my understanding, Wolf, that the law prohibits providing access to the FBI for these kinds of purposes. So I defer to the attorney general in this matter, in terms of making that sort of determination.

That is a policy decision by Congress. If Congress wants to change that policy, that's certainly within their prerogative to do so.

BLITZER: Would the White House welcome such a change in the law?

GONZALES: Obviously, the White House hasn't -- you know, we have a very detailed process of making an assessment of any kind of legislation, and so we would look at it, like we do in every case. And, you know, we probably would support it, but we'd have to look at it before I could commit to the administration to supporting that position.

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BLITZER: Because, obviously, to the average person out there who wants to crack down on terrorists, and terrorists being able to go freely and buy guns, there seems to be a loophole in there which would help them, which would facilitate their going ahead and doing precisely that.

GONZALES: The administration's very interested in cracking down on terrorists. And, if there is a loophole here, we're obviously interested in working with Congress to ensure that that loophole is closed.

BLITZER: When the attorney general was criticizing some of those who have criticized him, he appeared on Larry King Live after his congressional testimony. Listen to what he said on Thursday night.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ASHCROFT: I mean to say that those who are fearmongers, who simply want to announce conclusions, who use scare tactics and are afraid of real discussion and don't provide a basis or an opportunity for the truth to be known, that their work is counterproductive. It helps the other side, and not America.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: To which the "Washington Post" responded in an editorial on Friday: "His job is to defend dissent, not to use the moral authority of his office to discourage people from participating in one of the most fundamental obligations of citizenship."

GONZALES: I think what the attorney general was criticizing were those who express opinions and judgments without really knowing what the facts are; who criticize, for example, the use of the order without really understanding how the order is written and what the president intends, in terms of the use of the order. I think that's the source of the attorney general's frustration.

BLITZER: So, in other words, he's criticizing only those who are distorting, in effect, what he is saying.

GONZALES: I think what he's trying to do is to educate the American people, to inform them that they need to become more informed about what the true facts are, and that what people are saying may or may not be true in terms of being critical of administration policies.

BLITZER: You're the president's counsel. What do you think -- what does the president believe should be done with this American, John Walker, who was picked up as a fighter for the Taliban? As you know, he's under the control of the U.S. Marine Corps in southern Afghanistan right now.

GONZALES: We don't have all facts yet, Wolf. I think the folks at the Department of Defense and the Department of Justice are both trying to ascertain what the facts are and to make a decision as to where it is appropriate that this person be brought to justice.

BLITZER: Does the White House counsel's office weigh in specifically on the issue of treason, charges of treason if in fact they might eventually be brought against this young man?

GONZALES: Well, this is a prosecutorial decision, and normally we don't weigh in on prosecutorial decisions. We defer to the Department of Justice in those kinds of cases.

In this case, because it does involve perhaps a violation of the law of war, the Department of Defense is involved. We may or may not be involved in that decision, I don't know.

BLITZER: I mentioned earlier you might wind up on the U.S. Supreme Court one of these days. How serious is that possibility? Have you ever given that some thought?

(LAUGHTER)

GONZALES: (OFF-MIKE) the president. No, I haven't. There has been some speculation about that. But I've said consistently that I'm not a candidate for the court nor I do intend to be a candidate for the court.

I've got a lot to focus on right now. The president is confronting one of the -- a unique challenge to this country. And my job is to serve as his lawyer, and that's where all of my focus is right now.

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BLITZER: Judge Gonzales, thanks for joining us.

GONZALES: Thank you, Wolf.

BLITZER: Good luck to you.

GONZALES: Thank you.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BLITZER: Just ahead, despite President Bush's sky-high wartime approval ratings, Democrats are still challenging his domestic proposals. Are they overplaying their hand? We'll go 'round the table on that and more with Steve Roberts, Susan Page and Jonah Goldberg when LATE EDITION continues.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Still to come, we'll be talking with the New York mayor, Rudy Giuliani, live from Jerusalem, but time right now for our LATE EDITION roundtable.

Joining me: Susan Page, Washington bureau chief for "USA Today"; Steve Roberts, contributing editor for "U.S. News and World Report"; and Jonah Goldberg, contributing editor for the "National Review."

Steve, let me begin with you. The war looks like it's getting close to being over. All signs are suggesting that. Once again, where all naysayers going into this war wrong, as they were going into the Persian Gulf War 11 years ago?

STEVE ROBERTS, "U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT": Yes, and that includes me, I think. I was more cautious than I think certainly is justified. I think we made some mistakes. We overestimated the Taliban and its resiliency. All this talk about how tenacious they're going to be, turns out we made a mistake there.

I think we underestimated the effectiveness of American air power. I think we were going back to the Persian Gulf. But as Jim Woolsey said on this program a week or so ago and others have pointed out, 10 years is a long time in the development of weaponry. And our ability to use air in a much more pinpoint, effective way has really developed over 10 years. And I think we underestimated the fighting capabilities of those tribal allies that we had.

ROBERTS: So, yes, those of us who were -- who said this war was going to be a quagmire were wrong.

BLITZER: You know, there's still plenty of naysayers right now saying, hold back on the Iraqis right now, even though Senator Lott and Senator Lieberman, others, wrote this letter to the president saying sooner rather than later.

JONAH GOLDBERG, "NATIONAL REVIEW": Right. And that is really the fun debate in Washington right now for -- well, for want of a more politic term, "war junkies," is what happens next and whether Iraq is the next target. And it seems to be that there's a consensus jelling that Iraq will be the next target.

The question is, how does the president show the leadership to get us there, and what kind of war will it be? Will it be an Afghanistan-style war, or will it be something more prickly and targeted along the lines of what the Clinton administration does?

And there, I think, one of the biggest points of significance is actually the power of air power that Steve was talking about, in the sense that if air power is quantumly better than -- to make it into an adverb, which I don't think it is -- if it's a real quantum improvement in air power in terms of accuracy and the ability to achieve aims, and it lowers the threshold price for going to war for the United States because it means less collateral damage, fewer civilians killed, fewer Americans in the line of fire. And, therefore, it changes the whole way we argue about going to war.



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BLITZER: Susan, you know, as Tim Russert, my colleague, said earlier on his program, you're one of the best reporters in Washington right now...

(LAUGHTER)

BLITZER: ... so tell us, precisely, where does this debate over Iraq within the Bush administration stand right now?

SUSAN PAGE, "USA TODAY": Well, I think the administration is divided. There are those like Paul Wolfowitz who would target Iraq in the absence of any additional evidence that they were involved in September 11 because of concerns about their programs and their intentions.

And there are those who think it's more -- that you can't do that, unless you've maintained a coalition that includes Turkey, other allies in the region, and that that will be hard to do.

You know, it's interesting to make the comparison with the fact that this war has gone well, for the moment, with the Persian Gulf War, which also was shorter than many predicted, because, in many ways, we're still fighting the Persian Gulf War. Saddam Hussein is still in power. He still has programs to develop weapons of mass destruction. We're still trying to figure out how to deal with those.

And that war, like this one, I think, is going to go on for years and years. Because this not a war against Taliban leadership in Afghanistan, it's a war against an international terrorist network that's going to be much more persistent than something that's going to be toppled in the next few weeks.

ROBERTS: You know, I do think that those who advocate going into Iraq do talk a lot about this more efficient air power. I think it's something those of us who are cautious about Iraq have to take seriously.

But I think you can overestimate the analogy, as well, because, look, we took 5,000 casualties, as a country, fighting Osama bin Laden. And I think the country has a lot of tolerance for difficulties in Afghanistan. Four casualties -- fortunately, they've been very low.

But you have to wonder whether the same would be true of Saddam. He hadn't done anything to us lately. And also, he's a much more effective fighting force with a much more highly trained army. I think the casualties would be much higher.

And, look, the other reason we didn't "finish this job," quote, unquote, 10 years ago, was because of the question of our Muslim allies in that region -- Saudi Arabia and others -- wouldn't support this kind of attack. They were willing to support rolling back the incursion into Kuwait, but nothing beyond that.

So a lot of the reasons why we didn't go in 10 years ago are still there, haven't gone away.

PAGE: Well, you know, Bush will face the dilemma that President Clinton faced against Osama bin Laden, which was -- if he tries to target Iraq, which is that there's not an international and national consensus that this is the right thing to do.

And some critics say now that President Clinton had an obligation to build that consensus years ago, perhaps after the 1998 embassy bombings in East Africa. But he didn't do that, and one of the arguments they make is that the nation and the world wasn't ready for it.

Well, that may be exactly the situation that President Bush faces once the war in Afghanistan is over and the question is, who's next.

GOLDBERG: I totally agree with that, which is why I do think that the question is more about presidential leadership than it's about anything else. I mean, I think on the substance, you can make a very good case for going into Iraq in one way or the other. The idea that, you know, Saddam Hussein wouldn't use weapons of mass destruction, if he actually developed them, seems sort of dubious.

And my view is that the Republican guard -- Saddam Hussein, from what I've read, has sort of ignored building up his conventional army and put all his eggs in the mass destruction basket.

I think it's absolutely right that the country is sort of saying, well, there would be a lot of people who would reasonably say, well, wait a second, why are we going to war with Iraq, this was Osama bin Laden.



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And then it becomes a question of presidential leadership, of being able to persuade the American people to say, hey, look, you know, we sort of took a nap for 10 years before and let Osama bin Laden build up the al Qaeda network and put this plan into action, and we can't take a nap again and we have to be proactive.

And that's a -- it'd be a good debate, it'd be an ugly debate, but it would be a worthwhile one.

BLITZER: And if he wants that debate to go forward, Steve, the new Newsweek poll asks how is he doing, his job approval rating. He's still at 82 percent among the American public. Only 12 percent disprove of the job that he's doing.

If he wants to rally the American public against Saddam Hussein, he has a good base from which to start.

ROBERTS: Absolutely right. But he also has a tough case to make.

You know, 10 years ago the consensus was there. Every country in the world, really, had a common interest in saying, hey, we are against someone who crosses an international border and destabilizes a neighboring country. There was no real dissent from that.

It is a harder case to make. The hardest thing a president ever, ever does is send troops into battle where they can get killed. It is the most difficult decision a president ever makes.

Jonah is right. You have to make the case. Now, he does start from a good base. He's got credibility. He's an effective war leader.

But there are these doubts that are there, that he would have to overcome. And he would have to be willing to pay a high price.

And, look, his father learned it's a common place observation, it is true -- his father learned that those polls have only one way to go when at you are at 82 percent, and that is down. His father learned that 10 years ago.

BLITZER: Susan, we see that on the domestic political front, domestic economic issues, other domestic issues, the bipartisanship, the solid unity that's out there in terms of fighting the war seems to be crumbling.

Dick Cheney was on Meet the Press earlier, the vice president of the United States. Asked about economic stimulus package, he laid the blame directly at where he sees that problem is. Listen to this.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

RICHARD CHENEY, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: Tom Daschle, unfortunately, has decided, I think, in this case, to be more of an obstructionist. He has insisted that no bill can move forward unless two-thirds of the Senate Democrats support it. That's an artificially high barrier. What we need, last time I checked, to pass something through the Senate was 51 votes. But so far he has been unable to get anything through the U.S. Senate.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

PAGE: You know, what I think we heard this morning from Dick Cheney and from Trent Lott here on this show is both sides are beginning to lay the groundwork to blame the other side for why the stimulus package didn't pass. I think both sides are now -- I think the prospect is real that the Senate will go home for Christmas and not have passed a stimulus package.

BLITZER: Although you heard Senator Lott say he hopes they will pass it.

PAGE: And it is still possible that they will. But I think it's increasingly possible that they won't. And the question is then, who gets blamed with the number of Americans -- 800,000 Americans have been laid off in recent months. Who gets the blame for failing to kind of address the concerns that they have?

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BLITZER: And who loses more if they fail to reach an agreement soon -- the Democrats or the Republicans? Which party is more vulnerable?

GOLDBERG: I think it's, which branch of government is more vulnerable. I think it hurts the conservative Republicans, especially in the House, the most because they have most to lose.

George Bush is not up for reelection in 2002, so he is still going to remain the popular Republican president from the Republican Party. But for the congressional branches, it is an ugly fight.

And I don't know who loses more. It depends where this blame can land.

ROBERTS: Look, most Americans have no idea who Tom Daschle is, you know. We know, and people who watch this show know, but most Americans don't know.

But they know who George Bush is. And they know when 800,000 Americans lost their jobs, which is over two months, almost 800,000, almost a million over three months. That's a lot of people. And what they know is that George Bush is the president.

Now, he has great poll numbers, fair enough, but those are largely a reflection of national unity and the good job he has done running the war. He's potentially vulnerable on the economic side, again, as his father learned.

You always get more credit as a president for good times than you deserve, and you get more blame for bad times than you deserve. And he has to be careful with this one.

And if there's no stimulus package, even though the stimulus package probably wouldn't have much effect on the economy one way or another politically, it is a potential...

PAGE: Two big problems -- as the economy goes bad and people's focus, attention focus on its, George Bush has two big problems: one, no surplus; an era of deficit spending until at least 2005. And number two, his economic team is much weaker than his foreign policy team. They aren't able to make the public case the way Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney and Collin Powell have been able to make the public case for the administration. Two big weaknesses that the administration may have to face early next year.

BLITZER: Jonah, I don't know if you listened to Meet the Press earlier today, but the vice president was on. And he said something I thought was pretty curious. He was asked about 2004, if he would like to be on the ticket again running with George W. Bush. Listen to what he said.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

TIM RUSSERT, HOST, "MEET THE PRESS": Would you like to be on ticket in 2004?

CHENEY: If the president wants me and everything else makes sense, sure.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: I guess that he is pretty blunt about that.

(LAUGHTER)

A lot of speculation, given his heart problems, other issues. His health, I guess, the major issue, that that might not be another possibility, although he signaled clearly he would like to be on ticket.

GOLDBERG: It is, in my mind, a fairly cost-free admission. He has a perfect excuse not to be on ticket in 2004, considering the problems with his heart. And he's a team player, so, if it turns out that Bush and his advisers, and Karl Rove decide not to go with him, they're going to give him a face-saving way to get out of it. So, he's just being honest.

And when it's cost-free, why not be honest?

BLITZER: Honesty's the best policy in this kind of situation.

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Speaking about honesty is the best policy, Gary Condit, the Democratic Congressman from California, was honest this week and said he wants to run for he reelection next year. Listen to this.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIPS)

REP. GARY CONDIT (D), CALIFORNIA: I spent a long time public service. And it was very important to me to represent the Valley. They have allowed me to do that in this fashion. I'm going to continue to do it.

I'm going to just focus on my record.

(END VIDEO CLIPS)

ROBERTS: Well, he -- you know, we thought we'd seen the last of Gary Condit. Obviously we haven't. Might be the only person in America who harbors some gratitude for September 11. Got him off the front pages.

He's got a harder district than he did before. He's got some Republicans who see him as vulnerable, so he's going to have a tougher time than he did in the past.

But, you know, in terms of Cheney, if Cheney doesn't run, Republicans have a very good stable of potential substitutes. Giuliani, who's going to be on this program, could be very -- Don Rumsfeld, as secretary of defense, has been an excellent spokesman. Senator Hagel, who was on earlier, is developing a reputation. Republicans have a much stronger bench than the Democrats, looking ahead to 2004.

BLITZER: Never too early to look ahead to 2004, is it, Susan?

(LAUGHTER)

PAGE: Well it's always so much more fun to cover elections than government, so we're never against that.

(LAUGHTER)

BLITZER: And President Bush this week said that -- something he probably shouldn't have said that he doesn't necessarily love his mother Barbara Bush's cooking.

(LAUGHTER)

That's being very honest but perhaps a little bit too honest.

PAGE: Yes. And, well, you know, Laura Bush has said that she's not much of a cook either. So, you know, maybe kind of a trend there. He married someone just like his mother.

BLITZER: All right, we got to leave right there. Susan Page...

ROBERTS: I love my mother's cooking, I have to tell you.

BLITZER: I love my mother's cooking too. I've eaten it my whole life; I hope to eat it for many more years.

Susan Page, Steve Roberts, I want to say thanks to both of you. You've been great on the LATE EDITION roundtable. We loved having you. Unfortunately you're moving on.

Jonah Goldberg, you'll be back.

Thanks to all three of you.

We'll be back. And when we come back, we'll return with tensions in the Middle East boiling over. We'll speak with the mayor of New York, he's in Jerusalem, Rudy Giuliani. We'll also speak with Jerusalem's mayor Ahud Olmert. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back to LATE EDITION. The mayors of New York and Jerusalem, Rudy Giuliani and Ehud Olmert, weigh in the war against terrorism. Also, tensions in the Middle East and the

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efforts to reach a peace deal between the Israelis and the Palestinians. We'll also get the Palestinian perspective.

But first, CNN's Bill Delaney demonstrates how American patriotism has spread to an unlikely place, the liberal university campus.

(NEWSBREAK)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: Welcome back to LATE EDITION.

The Middle East remains a tinderbox one week after deadly terrorist attacks in Jerusalem and Haifa. There was another suicide bombing in Israel last night.

This week, New York Governor George Pataki, New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, and New York's soon-to-be Mayor Michael Bloomberg travelled to Israel in a show of solidarity against terrorism.

Joining us now from Jerusalem's David Citadel Hotel, the New York Mayor, Giuliani, of course, and the mayor of Jerusalem, his host, Ehud Olmert.

Mayors, thank you so much to both of you for joining us.

And, Mayor Giuliani, tell us why you went to Jerusalem right now.

RUDOLPH GIULIANI, MAYOR OF NEW YORK CITY: Very simple, Governor Pataki and Mayor-Elect Bloomberg and I wanted to be here to show our support for the state of Israel, for the city of Jerusalem in particular, but for the state of Israel, because they are involved in exactly the same fight that we're involved in. And if we expect people to support us in our fight against terrorism, we have to support them.

The connection between New York City, in particular, and Jerusalem and Israel is very, very close, and we wanted them to know that we appreciate their support for us and we're there for them. We understand what they have to do, and support them in their effort to try to eradicate this terrible, terrible threat to innocent population and innocent people.

BLITZER: So are you suggesting, fundamentally, as Prime Minister Sharon has suggested, that there's really no difference between Osama bin Laden and Yasser Arafat?

GIULIANI: I don't know if I'd talk about individuals, I'd talk about terrorism. There's no difference between and among people who sponsor terrorism and who slaughter innocent populations, civilian populations.

Many of these terrorist groups actually trained together and are interconnected in numerous ways.

So, I don't know if I'd get all kind of worked up about personalities, I'd start looking at like the organizations and the groups. They are interconnected, they do train together, they have people that go back and forth in between these different organizations. So you'd be kind of foolish to sort of separate it, at least from point of view of the organizations.

BLITZER: But, Mayor Giuliani, are you among those who have effectively written off Yasser Arafat as a realistic peace partner with the Israelis?

GIULIANI: Well, I think his record to date has been pretty abysmal. I mean, he made a lot of commitments, hasn't kept any of them, he certainly has done little or nothing to stop the terrorism that's emanating from the Palestinian Authority. And he's so far not lived up to any single commitment that he's made, which is a pretty abysmal record.

BLITZER: What about that, Mayor Olmert? If you're taking a look at the overall situation right now, is there anything else that the Israelis can do Israelis to prevent these kind of suicide bombings? Because, as we know, Israel's been the target of these kind of bombings for a long time.

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EHUD OLMERT, MAYOR OF JERUSALEM: Well, certainly, I think that there are certain things that we are doing. In fact, right now Prime Minister Sharon is holding a consultation in his home with a few of the senior ministers. He just showed up for a few minutes to congratulate the New York delegation, and he went immediately back to his home to continue the consultations.

There are certain things that can be done, but, strategically, my personal opinion is that, at the end of the day, we have to create a new reality without Yasser Arafat as the representative of the Palestinian Authority dealing with us.

OLMERT: Yasser Arafat did not fail. Yasser Arafat did not succeed. It is not a matter of success. Yasser Arafat didn't want to succeed, and he didn't want to fight terror. And he didn't really mean what he signed when he signed the Oslo Agreement. He is not a partner for peace.

So he can ease up a little bit of pressure or sometimes increases the pressure on the terrorist organizations. But he is very much spiritually, ideologically, part of it. And that's why I don't think that he can be a partner for peace negotiations.

BLITZER: So, so, you...

OLMERT: I don't suggest, Wolf, that anyone will eliminate Yasser Arafat. I just think that I wish there had been political process, a democratic process within the Palestinian community, that they would have dumped him out and choose someone that can seriously negotiate a peace process with us and not someone who is engaged almost continuously and repeatedly with terrorist actions of the worst possible kind.

BLITZER: Let me bring back Mayor Giuliani.

Mayor Giuliani, if you're taking a look at Yassar Arafat right now -- let me point out what our latest Newsweek poll says.

Can Arafat control extremist Palestinian groups? Among the American public, only 29 percent believe he can; 63 percent believe he cannot control Palestinian groups, extremist groups.

If he can't control them, why should he be blamed for these suicide bombings?

(LAUGHTER)

GIULIANI: Well, then why is he in charge? I mean, you can't have it both ways. If you are going to negotiate peace, peace means the end of terrorism, a cessation to terrorism. So, if he can't control them, then maybe he should step aside and then should negotiate with someone else.

So you really can't have it both ways. I mean, if he can't control terrorism from within his territory, then it makes no sense to be negotiating with him. After all, what your negotiating is a peaceful solution.

BLITZER: Well, but is...

GIULIANI: Let me finish, Wolf. If you are going to make concessions to him and your people are going to continue to be slaughtered, well, then it doesn't make sense to be making concessions to him any longer.

BLITZER: Mayor Olmert, is there an alternative to Yasser Arafat? There were elections on the West Bank of Gaza and he was elected. There were international observers there. The Palestinian people clearly believe he is their leader.

OLMERT: Come on, this was, I think, six, seven years ago that there were the last elections. I don't take it seriously. There was no free elections, there were no alternative.

Do you know of one candidate that stood against Yasser Arafat, Wolf? That there were free elections with international observers, this is ridiculous.

Look, there can be alternative to Arafat. And it was not written in the Bible to the best of my knowledge that only Yasser Arafat can make peace with Israel.

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He doesn't want to make peace. He wants to continue terror. And as I think Mayor Giuliani correctly said, either he can control the extremist organizations or he is not a viable partner. If he is not a viable partner, we have to wait until there will be a viable partner.

We are not going to determine for the Palestinians who their leader will be. But we are not going to make peace with someone who wasn't want to make peace with us, and who is instead interested in carrying on terrorist activities and creating, you know, just an appearance of a peaceful attitude which is not the case.

I think that Yasser Arafat never ceased to be the head of a terrorist organization. His basic attitude is such. And I think he has to step down. And I hope that someone else will take over as the leader of the Palestinian community who is serious and that will be prepared to make concessions with Israel.

Who this guy will be, I don't know. And I'm not going to determine for them. But I think time has come for change-over with the Palestinian community.

BLITZER: What lessons, Mayor Giuliani, do you believe, that the American mayors can learn from Israel's experience in dealing with terrorism over these many years? Because, as you know, despite the enormous security precautions Israel has taken, Israel still suffers from these kinds of terrorist attacks.

GIULIANI: Well, I drew a lot on the lessons that I learned from having come to Israel back in 1996 when the bus bombings were taking place, and the other attacks, and other times that I have come here. I drew a lot of lessons from that having to deal with the attack on New York City on September 11.

The most important part is being able to go on with your life, being able to go forward with your life, and not have the terrorists destroy your ability to lead a free and independent life.

And every time I have come to Israel, I have been absolutely amazed by the strength and resiliency of the people of Israel. And it reminds me very, very much of the strength and resiliency of the people of New York City after being attacked on September 11, which I'm really in awe of.

BLITZER: Mayor Olmert, as far as the Bush administration is concerned a lot of talk that when the Prime Minister Sharon was here in Washington a week ago he effectively received a green light from the U.S. government, from the Bush administration, to go ahead and retaliate against Palestinian targets in Gaza and the West Bank, to which Saeb Erekat, someone you've known for many years, a Palestinian negotiator, had this to say on CNN earlier this week.

I want you to listen to what Mr. Erekat has to say.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SAEB ERAKAT, CHIEF PALESTINIAN NEGOTIATOR: I hope that President Bush will stand up immediately and tell Sharon, "Enough is enough. You have no green light from me. And I want you back to the negotiating table, and I want the Zinni mission to succeed."

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: That was a reference to the mission of General Anthony Zinni, the special U.S. envoy who's still trying to get these peace negotiations back on track.

Is there any prospect at all that these negotiations are going to get back on track any time soon?

OLMERT: I think that President Bush did precisely what Saeb Erekat had asked him to do. He said, "Enough is enough, Yasser Arafat. Stop terror. Stop your support for terrorists. Return back to the table of negotiations after you have stopped all the terrorist activities."

And General Zinni said the same thing as Yasser Arafat, enough is enough. The whole world really says to Yasser Arafat, enough is enough. Stop this terror. Stop send your suicidal attackers to kill innocent Israeli civilians in the hearts of their towns, in their buses, in their homes, in the streets. Stop the killing, stop the bloodshed, stop the terror, if you can.



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If you can't, then maybe you are not the partner. If you don't want, then certainly you are not the partner, but stop it.

So I think Saeb Erekat is absolutely accurate in his expectations except that, unfortunately, he doesn't understand that they are to be blamed because they're conducting terror and they have to stop it right now. Stop it.

BLITZER: Mayor Giuliani, you're getting ready to step down as the mayor of New York City less than a month from now.

Briefly, while we have you, tell us a little bit what your immediate plans are going to be after you step down as mayor of New York.

GIULIANI: I think take a long rest might be a good thing to do...

(LAUGHTER)

GIULIANI: ... which for me will probably be a day or two.

(LAUGHTER)

Watch a few football games and get ready for spring training. I'm thinking about seeing if I can play right field for New York Yankees with my hero Paul O'Neill retiring.

BLITZER: If President Bush...

(CROSSTALK)

BLITZER: Go ahead, Mayor.

OLMERT: Yes, I just wanted to say to Rudy that my dream is to run with him in Central Park in New York, to make a jog of about six, seven, eight miles together in one early morning, you know, some day in the city of New York. And he says that he will get ready for the summer so that we'll run together, how about that.

BLITZER: We'll have TV cameras to record that video, if in fact that happens.

OLMERT: All right, that sounds great.

BLITZER: Mayor Giuliani, if President Bush were to call upon you for your service in his administration, would you say yes?

GIULIANI: Well, I think, you know, those are things you don't talk about publicly, and I'm a very, very big supporter of President Bush. I was, you know, before he got elected and worked very hard to try to get him elected.

And since September 11, I think, like the rest of America, I'm very, very -- even a bigger supporter of his. I think very, very quickly, President Bush responded to just about one of the worst crises that any American president has ever faced, and he's already demonstrated he's a great president.

BLITZER: OK, two mayors, the mayor of New York, the mayor of Jerusalem, thanks to both of you for joining us.

Good luck to you, Mayor Giuliani, in your private life. I'm sure you'll be back here on LATE EDITION...

GIULIANI: Thank you, Wolf.

BLITZER: ... many times. Good luck to both of you, Mayor Olmert, Mayor Giuliani. Thank you very much.

And up next, the Palestinian perspective. We'll talk with the chief Palestinian representative here in the United States, Hassan Abdel Rahman, and James Zogby of the Arab American Institute. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)



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BLITZER: Welcome back.

Joining us now with a different perspective are two guests: in New York, the chief Palestinian representative here in the United States, Hassan Abdel Rahman, and here in Washington, James Zogby, the president of the Arab American Institute.

And, Mr. Rahman, let me begin with you. You heard both Mayor Giuliani and Mayor Olmert say that, effectively, they've apparently given up hope that Yasser Arafat can get the job done.

Can Yasser Arafat right now still control the situation, crack down on these terrorists and resume negotiations with the Israelis?

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PLO'S CHIEF U.S. REPRESENTATIVE: But before, allow me a brief comment.

First, you called Mr. Olmert the mayor of Jerusalem, while he is only the mayor of half of Jerusalem, because the other half was annexed illegally by Israel. It was never recognized by any country in the world, including the United States, and the population of East Jerusalem, which is 220,000 Palestinians, never elected him. So he is the mayor of West Jerusalem and not East Jerusalem.

The second comment that I would like to make, that there is one word I did not hear, and that is "occupation." Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories for over 35 years, which makes it the longest foreign military occupation in modern history.

Having said that, now I will turn to your question. Yasser Arafat cannot succeed on his own as long as the Palestinian territory are located by Israel, that the Palestinian people are under siege, that Israel continues its policy of assassination, demolishing of houses, systematic bombardment of Palestinian security infrastructure. It makes it extremely difficult for Yasser Arafat to succeed.

For Yasser Arafat to succeed in his efforts, he needs the cooperation of the Israelis, and that a modification in the behavior of Israel vis-a-vis the Palestinians. But, if...

BLITZER: Well, on that...

RAHMAN: Yes?

BLITZER: I was going to say, on that specific point about ending the occupation, most U.S. officials, most people around the world believe there was a very generous offer made from the previous Israeli government at Camp David last year to end the occupation and create an independent Palestinian state that would live alongside Israel, including East Jerusalem, that would be part of this new Palestinian state, an offer that Yasser Arafat rejected, an offer that would have ended the occupation.

RAHMAN: You see, you are repeating exactly the story that was told by the Israelis, but you did not listen to our story.

BLITZER: But that was also told by former President Bill Clinton.

RAHMAN: Yes, but you know President Clinton was supporting his wife's election in New York and he took that position. I don't want to get into that.

But if that was the generous offer that you are talking about, then why President Clinton made a different offer two months later? Because he knew that the first offer was inadequate, and that's why he made the second offer. And on the basis of second offer, we negotiated with the Israelis until January 28, seven days before Israel election.

What brought this turnabout, Wolf, is the provocative visit of Sharon to Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem on September 29, and the subsequent Israel's use of lethal weapon that killed 69 Palestinians in five days of demonstrations before one Israeli was injured.

BLITZER: All right.

RAHMAN: So we have to really set the record clear on this.

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BLITZER: Let me bring Jim Zogby in. He's an American of Arab ancestry. He's got some strong views on this as well.

There's a Newsweek poll. We've been citing it today. One of the questions: "Who's to blame for the recent Middle East violence?" Israelis, 11 percent. Palestinians, 42 percent. Both equally, 23 percent. Neither or other, 4 percent. Don't know, 20 percent.

Clearly, by a four-to-one margin, most Americans are blaming the Palestinians, not the Israelis.

JAMES ZOGBY, ARAB AMERICAN INSTITUTE: Well, that's always the numbers we get. In fact, we've polled on that question now for about 10 years, and those are his...

BLITZER: And your brother's a very famous pollster.

ZOGBY: Right. And those are historically the numbers you get.

It means the Israeli narrative is better understood, and the Israeli narrative is better accepted. It defines -- it actually defines the way Americans talk about the issue. It is not an exact historical definition of blame, as much as it is this is the way the public perceives it.

And of course, look, you know, when you want to assess blame, the question is, where do you start? If you want to start with the suicide bombers, the terrorists who struck a few days ago, then the Palestinians started it. If you want to go back to Sharon's assassinating some Palestinian leaders, then the Israelis started it. Or else you can go a little further, or else you can go back to the beginning of the occupation, or you can go back to '48.

The question of, in other words, defining blame is where you start the historical narrative. The Israeli historical narrative, probably since the film the "Exodus" was shown here in America, and most people saw it, came away saying, the Israelis are the good guys and the Palestinians are the bad guys. That's pretty much how we've talked about it now all these many years.

BLITZER: So what happens now, Jim Zogby? There's a problem, there's a stalemate.

ZOGBY: Right.

BLITZER: There's talk of eliminating Yasser Arafat right now, comparisons to Osama bin Laden.

(CROSSTALK)

BLITZER: You heard Mayor Giuliani, a very popular politician here in the United States.

ZOGBY: Right. And in fact he's wrong. And Giuliani has always been unfair to President Arafat, even during the days of the peace process, when Arafat was coming to the United States and was recognized in a much different way, Giuliani was rude and, in fact, very undiplomatic in how he dealt with him. New York politics largely, I think, to play there.

Eliminating Yasser Arafat would be, I think, a terrible tragedy, and the situation we're dealing with right now is in fact a terrible tragedy.

There is no way to eliminate the Palestinian Authority and to reoccupy the West Bank and Gaza without disastrous consequences. And the Palestinians have suffered enormously, all these many years. In fact, frankly, I don't think Israel ever really understood daily life for Palestinians or the trauma that's been imposed on them.

ZOGBY: I also don't think it's been understood here in the United States what it's like growing up with 50 percent unemployment; what it's like growing up where the single largest source of income as being a day laborer in the dirtiest and lowest-paid jobs in Israel; what it's like living under occupation, when your houses can be destroyed or new settlements can be built on your land and you have no right to stop it.

The sense of alienation and powerlessness, I think, is what's created all this.

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And even what was called the most generous deal issued -- given by Prime Minister Barak, kept in place all those settlements on Palestinian land and kept in place Israeli checkpoints in the West Bank and Gaza and kept in place the fact that Palestinians would have no access freely to go in or out of their territory. His most generous offer gave Palestinians what South Africans rejected, bantustans (ph), and it's a tragedy we never recognize that.

BLITZER: Mr. Rahman, the whole nature of what the Palestinian Authority president, Yasser Arafat, is doing right now, he and his security forces are arresting some suspected terrorists.

What precisely is he doing, as far as those who belong to Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad? Tell our viewers what's happening on that front.

RAHMAN: Well, anyone who is violating the cease-fire is being arrested. Anyone who is violating the commitments that the authority is making is being arrested, is being punished.

The problem is that, you know, there's violence on the Palestinian side that is conducted by a fringe group, by very, very small Palestinian group.

On the other side, the killing of the Palestinians by the Israelis is done by the Israeli government and by the Israeli army. We put those who violate the cease-fire in prison, but nobody puts the Israeli generals and the Israeli politicians who order the killing of Palestinians or the settlers who kill Palestinians in prison.

And that is the problem. On the one hand, we are asked to do our job and no one is stopping the Israelis on the other hand.

BLITZER: Let me ask you this, though. The State Department and Bush administration flatly says that Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad are terrorist organizations which must be shut down. Is that the view of the Palestinian Authority?

RAHMAN: We believe that there are certain individuals who are involved in acts of violence and acts of terrorism, and we are willing to take action against them.

This is our view: We believe that those who commit act of violence or plan acts of violence or engaged in any support for acts of violence, you have to be tried. And we are willing to keep our commitment.

The problem is, as I said, Israeli violence goes unpunished. You have 1,000 Palestinians killed. I did not see enough coverage on any network, including the CNN, of the suffering of the Palestinians...

BLITZER: All right. Let me go bring back Jim...

RAHMAN: ... while the suffering of the Israelis is being covered very extensively.

BLITZER: Let me bring back Jim Zogby and talk about the freezing of assets of a large Muslim charity here in the United States, the Holy Land Foundation. As you know, the Bush administration shut it down, effectively, this week, saying it was providing money to Hamas and other groups on the West Bank and Gaza that were supporting terrorists.

Was that a justified action?

ZOGBY: Well, I think that there was quite a bit of hoopla about it. I mean, the president announcing it from the White House and creating, I think, much greater, much larger story about this than probably is warranted.

The fact is that the charges, as I understand them, that have finally been made against this group -- and there have been allegations for years, but never formal charges -- is not that they support Hamas directly, but that their charity goes to survivors of Hamas, either bombers who've been killed or...

BLITZER: Suicide bombers.

ZOGBY: ... or survivors, in one sort or another and that that is considered fungible assets that go to help underwrite some of activity.

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Those are charges that should be addressed in legal proceedings. I know their group is preceding on that. And if, in fact, they are in violation of U.S. law, it will be a problem for them.

But I think that the larger issue that has to be addressed here is that American Muslims are asking how can they contribute and what can they can give to legitimately, and there's a lot of fear right now afoot, that they don't know -- this is the end of Ramadan coming up. People want to give to charities. It's their religious obligation to do so. And frankly, they don't know where they can go.

And I think it is incumbent upon the administration to help provide a clean bill of health for groups that they do deem legitimate, that are not in violation, so he we can get on with this.

But the case against the Holy Land Foundation is one that still will be addressed in legal proceedings.

BLITZER: All right. Jim Zogby, Ambassador Rahman, thank to both of you for joining us. Unfortunately, we have to leave it right there.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

BLITZER: Thank you.

We'll get to our military analysts in the search for Osama bin Laden shortly. They'll also be taking your phone calls and your questions, but first, let's go to CNN's Catherine Callaway with a quick check of all the latest developments.

(NEWSBREAK)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BUSH: Your courage during the defining hour of the 20th century gives this country the same steadiness of purpose. The same resolution to meet this the first great challenge of the 21st century.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: For president George Bush speaking on the 60th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Welcome back to LATE EDITION.

Joining us now from Little Rock, Arkansas, the CNN military analyst, the former supreme allied commander, the NATO commander, General Wesley Clark, and in Montgomery, Alabama, retired U.S. Air Force Colonel John Warden.

Gentlemen, thanks for joining us.

Let me begin with you, General Clark, your assessment of where this war in Afghanistan stands right now.

GEN. WESLEY CLARK (RET.), CNN MILITARY ANALYST: Well, I think we've done a really superb job of using air power with the special forces on the ground to really smash the Taliban resistance. The Taliban is finished, at least as an entity which could control Afghanistan.

Now we're in a much more difficult phase. We've got to use the people on the ground. The Afghan's have to take the lead in this. We've got to find Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar and that's going to be very difficult.

BLITZER: In that particular phase, Colonel Warden, air power in this cave-to-cave, house-to-house search for Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar is not necessarily going to do the job.

COL. JOHN WARDEN (RET.), AIR FORCE: I think we really need to think about where we are from a strategic standpoint. From a strategic standpoint, the Taliban is gone. al Qaeda in Afghanistan is no longer functions as a organization. And if we get into those caves, we got the Mullah Omar or if we

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get bin Laden himself, that -- that's useful, but it's not strategically necessary at this point. Bin Laden was a dangerous guy because of his organization, not so much because of bin Laden.

BLITZER: General Clark, why do you say the next phase, this current phase is going to be more difficult than the initial phase, the initial phase to destroy the Taliban rule -- leadership of Afghanistan. To give friendly forces control effectively of all the major cities, most of the country. That seems like a pretty formidable challenge. Why is the next challenge more difficult?

CLARK: Well, I don't want to do anything to suggest that it wasn't formal challenge. I think that our leadership did a great job of putting together an unconventional strategy using air power with minimal foot print on the ground to really target them precisely. But that's what air power can do. And since the operation in Kosovo, we've put so much more emphasis on being able to strike what we call mobile targets. That it's good to see the payoff here.

But now we're focusing not on, on troop formations that are fixed in positions except around the caves maybe, but we're focusing on a network of people. They're people that are doing their best to hide. They can move in small groups. They can blend into the population. There are bases in some 50 countries in the world.

We know that, at least on an unclassified basis, we figure about two-thirds of the al Qaeda network is still alive. And even though this is not a conventional military organization, which can spring back, as long as those people are out there and unrepentant, they can reform and they still present a threat to the United States. So we have to have a different methodology now. We're going after individuals, not forces.

BLITZER: Colonel Warden, were you surprised at effectiveness of air power in this two-month war that's been under way, since the U.S. launched airstrikes on October 7?

WARDEN: Not really because it was really the -- a further development of the way that we planned and used air power in the Gulf War. And it has developed significantly more and we've seen some revolutionary things in the use of armed predators and other unmanned vehicles.

So I think that we really need to think about this not so much as just air power, but as the use of American extraordinary asymmetric advantages, technological advantages. And the longer that we continue thinking in that way and stay on that kind of an approach, the better off we're going to be.

BLITZER: Let's take a caller from Georgia. Go ahead, please.

CALLER: Yes. Thank you, Wolf. You have a great show.

General Clark, should we go into Iraq next, and if we do, should -- how many ground troops would be needed and what would be the overall cost? I know that's a tough question, but what do you think?

CLARK: Well, I think we certainly have to find a way to deal with Saddam Hussein and his acquisition of weapons of mass destruction. I'm not sure that that's the next target. It really depends on where the information trail leads us. We're going to have to exploit the information we've picked up in Afghanistan. We're going to have to continue to work there and take apart the network and then we're going to have to trace that network out.

In the meantime, we need to be building the basis for a case against Afghanistan. We need to go back to the United Nations. We need to say, again, that the members of the U.N. Security Council should be putting pressure on Iraq to comply with U.D. directives to open up those storage sites, let us see what's there.

And then, if Saddam doesn't do that, then not only the United States, but all the members of the United Nations should force a reckoning with them. It may not be military forces, it may not be thousands of troops, it may be something else.

BLITZER: All right. Let's take another caller from Florida. Go ahead, please.



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CALLER: Hi. This is Ray Ennis (ph) from Winterhaven (ph), Florida. Wolf and General and Colonel, good to speak to you.

My concern is, and it bothers me so much, maybe these tribal -- tribe people can forgive each other so much for the atrocities that the Taliban have put on their people. But -- and I think they should be put into a war court -- I'm sorry, like the Nuremberg trials and also, like we did in the Japanese war crimes tribunal.

BLITZER: Let me ask Colonel Warden, what do you think should be done to the Taliban leadership and the Taliban soldiers, rank and file, who are captured?

WARDEN: I think it's fairly easy from the rank and file standpoint, that these guys were soldiers. They were doing their job in one way or another and the sooner that you begin to forget kinds of things or at least have some degree of forgiveness, the faster that Afghanistan begins to put itself back together.

And for the Taliban leaders, you really need to have some fairly precise definition of what they may have done insofar as active support of al Qaeda and then al Qaeda's operations against the United States.

If all they did were things in Afghanistan, that, to me, is strictly an Afghanistan problem that they will resolve in the best way that they can.

BLITZER: General Clark, as you know, there's a new videotape. Paul Wolfowitz the deputy defense secretary, spoke about it on this program earlier, first reported in the "Washington Post" this morning. Vice president Cheney spoke about it. The chairman of the joint chiefs, General Myers, also spoke about this videotape in which Osama bin Laden is seen and heard talking about the September 11 attacks, suggesting that he was directly responsible for planning it, for plotting it, certainly for applauding it.

I want you to listen to what General Myers had to say earlier in the day about this videotape.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MYERS: Well, I'm almost afraid to go into that too much, but I will use a couple of words. He was relaxed. And let me just --- it was, obviously, from my view anyway, the few segments that I saw, he was conducting it like it was a private conversation.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: General Clark, clearly, U.S. officials believe it's legitimate, authentic. What do you think the administration should do with this tape, which appears to be hard evidence, a smoking gun, directly linking Osama bin Laden to September 11?

CLARK: Well, I hope this will be the opportunity for the administration to go to the United Nations and to establish a war crimes tribunal that will really be able to use this tape and other evidence to bring Osama bin Laden before justice, not only American justice, but international justice, because he really is a war criminal, just as the caller said, just as we brought the trials at the end of the second World War, or as we have Slobodan Milosevic in the Hague right now.

It'd be a wonderful thing to be able to present that evidence and let the whole world see exactly what Osama bin Laden planned and how he reacted to it and let everyone stand in judgment of him.

BLITZER: Let's take another caller from Toronto. Go ahead, please.

CALLER: Yes. First, I would like to say that I admire and respect the American military...

BLITZER: Excuse me, ma'am. Could you turn down your TV, because you're obviously confusing our audience.

CALLER: All right. I'm sorry.

General, first, I would like to say that I admire and respect your military and America. And my question is, how are you going to weed out the al Qaeda people and the Taliban from the rest of the Afghanistan people?



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BLITZER: All right.

Colonel Warden, do you want to handle that?

WARDEN: Yes. I think, again here, that there are two sets of issues. The one are the strategic issues, the other the tactical issues.

The strategic issues are significantly solved now. Afghanistan no longer supporting terrorists. Al Qaeda in Afghanistan is broken. There may be guys alive, but they're sure not functioning as an organization that can lay together offensive operations.

So it's useful to get some of the rest of these guys, but I think that, from a strategic standpoint, we really need now to start thinking about the bigger picture, which may in fact involve Iraq.

BLITZER: General Clark, I know you've given a lot of thought to this 20-year-old American who was fighting and captured with the Taliban, John Walker. The Marines now have him under their control. Paul Wolfowitz said earlier today, Vice President Cheney said earlier today that he has provided some useful information to the U.S. military about the nature of the Taliban, other issues.

What do you think that -- what should be done with this guy?

CLARK: Well, he fought against -- he fought in support of forces that were hostile to the United States. He's still an American citizen. It's wartime. He's certainly indictable as a traitor. And then, having indicted him, then we would have to figure out exactly the right venue and, if he is giving useful information, if he's young, if he was misguided or whatever, there may be mitigating circumstances.

But the simple fact is, he fought, he sided against the American people and our government, he sided with people who killed thousands of Americans. That's wrong.

BLITZER: Colonel Warden, Senator Biden, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, said earlier on this program that a lot will depend now on how cooperative John Walker is with the U.S. military and the U.S. government. Should that in fact be an important factor in determining his fate?

WARDEN: I would think so. It's not clear quite yet as to whether that he was deliberately fighting against American forces, or whether he was just sucked up in a set of events that changed rather dramatically when we started the attack on Afghanistan.

As General Clark said, however, there's very clearly indictable offenses there, which seems ought to be mitigated significantly if in fact that he did -- is giving us some useful information.

So I think that the thing will work out probably, some way or other, that he's indicted but probably not thrown in jail for the rest of his life.

BLITZER: General Clark, in all of your personal military experience, did you ever come across a case like this John Walker?

CLARK: No. But there were reports during the Vietnam War there were some Americans who had deserted and were seen fighting with the Vietcong or North Vietnamese. I never personally had any experience about it. I think those records are rumored, I've never seen the records myself, but it has happened, and I'm sure it happened in World War II as well.

And these people have to be dealt with in an appropriate fashion. And then, if there are mitigating circumstances, fine.

But, you know, the thing about John Walker is, it's like every parent's nightmare that a young person will be misguided and end up in circumstances like this, and I think everybody feels sympathy for the parents and some understanding for him, but the simple fact is, who he was with and what he was doing was simply wrong, and it needs to be dealt with in an appropriate fashion in this country.

BLITZER: All right, gentlemen, stand by, we're going to take a quick break. We still have a lot more to talk about, including a lot more phone calls and questions for our military analysts. LATE EDITION will be right back.

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(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back to LATE EDITION. We're continuing our discussion, taking more of your phone calls for CNN military analysts Gen. Wesley Clark and the retired U.S. Air Force Col. John Warden.

Let's take another caller from Kentucky. Go ahead, please.

CALLER: Yes, Mr. Blitzer, and all your honored guests. May I just simply say that I am an Army veteran, and only wishes she had waited two more years to retire.

My question is, could you please explain to me the British stance against capital punishment for bin Laden, please?

BLITZER: All right. Well, let me bring in Gen. Clark on this. As you know, Gen. Clark, Britain and all the European Union, they have a rule, they have a law there that they will not extradite anyone to the United States, which has capital punishment, if that individual is eligible to be executed here in the United States.

Presumably, if you want to take this to a -- some sort of level, if Osama bin Laden were to get to Europe, or to Britain, on that soil, he couldn't be extradited to the United States unless the United States promised he wouldn't be executed.

Is that the case, as far as you know it?

CLARK: As far as I know it, it is. It's been a long-standing issue between the United States and its European allies, and it's just one of those areas in which political opinion on the one side of the Atlantic is different than it is on the other side.

I would say this, though, in defense of the Europeans. When they put someone in jail and they leave him there for a long time, it can be a very, very unpleasant experience there. Jails are very tough. They're very impersonal. And they don't have a lot of the amenities that some of the other prisoners in the United States have grown accustomed to. So, it can be pretty miserable over there for people who've been incarcerated for a long time.

BLITZER: Colonel Warden, there's been a lot of controversy about these military commissions. These military tribunals that the Bush administration, that President Bush wants to have in order to deal with these suspected terrorists, not U.S. citizens. Is this something that you think militarily should be engaged in?

WARDEN: I think actually in this particular case it works out well for a couple of reasons. That one, when you get right down to it that bin Laden and al Qaeda committed a crime against the United States. So I think we ought to assume responsibility and in this particular case especially, not try to turn it over to the United Nations.

Second thing is that the tribunals and the general court-martial system despite what some of the publicity says about it is an extraordinary fair process and one that rather surprisingly has in general a slightly lower conviction rate than do civilian courts or federal district courts in any event. So the military tribunal approach in the event, I suspect unlikely we actually end up taking bin Laden alive, is I think is probably exactly the right way to go about it.

BLITZER: You have a little different take, though, General Clark, correct me if I'm wrong. You still believe as I think you suggested on this program today that the international court in the Hague, the War Crimes Tribunal that's dealing with Milosevic of Yugoslavia. That might be in a more -- more of an appropriate venue for the leadership of some of these terrorist organizations?

CLARK: I think so, Wolf and for this reason, because although the attack was on U.S. soil, there were a number of people killed from other countries and the United States has been the strongest proponent for over half a century of international justice. We built the United Nations. We built the international court system. We've supported that system.

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And now for us to suddenly say, well, we've got enough power, we're not going to use it, we're going to just bring them here and try them in our own country. And especially to say we may use a system that is not open for public observation. It risks undoing a lot of good that we've done around the world for half a century, really trying to open the process of justice. It's what we stand for.

Now, if I could, Wolf, just a word on these military tribunals. As I understood it, they are not a court-martial. It's not that they're going to receive the protection of military law. Military law is actually quite good and Colonel Warden is exactly right that when you go before a military court martial, you get a lot of protection if you're the defendant.

But it's my understanding that this is a military tribunal, but it's not under the uniform code of military justice. It's under rules yet to be crafted under circumstances that will apparently not provide all those safeguards for defendants and intentionally so in order to risk disclosing evidence and information that might some how aid other terrorists to operate against the United States.

And I think that we're just going to have to look at this very carefully. The more open we can make the system of justice, the more transparent, the more we can get by in from the international community, the greater help we're going to receive in smashing the rest of the al Qaeda network.

And even though their base area has been destroyed in Afghanistan, and even though that organization's now on the run, it's not finished and one thing in war that we know is.

When you start the fight, you got to finish the fight all the way through and take out the enemy leadership and all of its capabilities, otherwise they're liable to come back and get us.

So we'll need to finish this all the way and we need support of other nations to do it and that's the reason why I would be in favor of however we could internationalize this and make it more open and get more buy in. I think that's the key thing we need right here.

BLITZER: General Clark, always good to have you on the program.

Colonel Warden, thanks for joining us. We hope you'll be back. I'm assuming that you will.

Thanks to both of you once again for all of your help.

And just ahead, Bruce Morton's "Last Word."

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BRUCE MORTON, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): New York City's mayor-elect Michael Bloomberg spent \$68,968,185.00 of his own money to get elected. That works out to \$92.60 per vote.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: Is American democracy subject to the highest bidder? Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Time now for Bruce Morton's "Last Word" on war, money and politics.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MORTON (voice-over): You could argue that in Afghanistan the easy part is over. That is, high-tech U.S. power plus anti-Taliban guerrillas have won the conventional war, they control the cities and so on.

Now probably comes the harder part. Hunting guerrillas who know the ground well in a country full of caves. Difficult to know how that will go and while we wait to find out, let me change the subject for a minute and talk about a truly alarming development in the United States.

We've all made jokes about American politics for years, the best government money can buy and so on. Well, it's not funny. New York City's mayor-elect Michael Bloomberg spent \$68,968,185.00 of his own money to get elected. That works out to \$92.60 per vote.

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It is a record of course more than the \$63 million John Corzine, New Jersey's junior senator, spent on his election and he was running in a state, though a small one to be sure. It's almost as much as Ross Perot spent running for president in 1992, and way more than Steve Forbes running for president in 2000.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: All you can do with money is get your message out.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MORTON: It is perfectly constitutional of course. Would we like it better if, instead of just having millionaires run, we had ordinary people who were deeply in hock to this corporation or that labor union or whatever? Probably not.

But isn't there some way to get money out of the system? Maybe not. You can have public financing, but taxpayers might object to having their tax dollars spent on TV ads, political consultants, and the like, and anyway there's nothing to stop a Perot, a Bloomberg from saying, as they did, no, I don't want public money, I'll stay outside the system and do it on my own, my way. The courts have said, that's their right.

So we are probably stuck with a system which ensures that a lot of our elected officials -- you can't say freely elected -- are rich people. That doesn't sound much like the America we read about in history books, but it's where we are.

Which reminds we, we've been honoring the veterans of the Pacific War this past week, and you know? Bloomberg's 9260 is about what my father made in a week back then. How times have changed.

I'm Bruce Morton.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BLITZER: Thank you very much, Bruce.

And now some of your e-mails. Many viewers wrote to us about the U.S. roundup of potential suspects in the war on terrorism.

Jerry, for example, defends the government's action: "If so many civil liberties have been violated, where are the usual flurry of lawsuits? Perhaps it is because in fact laws have not been broken by the Justice Department."

Shifting now to new hopes for independence among Afghan women, Dave encourages them to celebrate the fall of the Taliban: "American women burn the bra, and now it is time for Afghan women to burn the veil."

Remember you can send your e-mail to LATE EDITION at [cnn.com](mailto:cnn.com), you can also register to receive my e-mails at [cnn.com/e-mail](mailto:cnn.com/e-mail).

And time now for a look at what's on the cover of this week's major news magazines here in the United States.

"TIME" magazine follows the last days of the Taliban with leader Mullah Mohammed Omar on the cover.

"Newsweek" has the American Taliban, the saga of John Walker, on the cover.

And on the cover of "U.S. News and World Report," Rum Punch: Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld tells people off, shuts people up, and says what he thinks, you got a problem with that? Good cover.

That's your LATE EDITION for Sunday, December 9. Please join us again next Sunday and every Sunday at noon Eastern for the last word in Sunday talk.

During the week I'll see you twice a day, 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. Eastern for two editions of Wolf Blitzer Reports.

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Until then, thanks very much for watching.

Happy anniversary to my parents.

Enjoy the rest of your weekend. I'm Wolf Blitzer in Washington. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS  
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Talking Points Interview With Hassan Abdel Rahman Fox News Network December 4, 2001 Tuesday



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BYLINE: Bill O'Reilly

BODY:

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BILL O'REILLY, HOST: ...now battling its own local chapters over money in the September 11 Fund. We'll have the latest. And wait till you hear this. Arafat under fire. Should the United States cut off all aid to the Palestinian Authority if the chairman doesn't quit? And should the American who fought for the Taliban lose his citizenship and be tried for treason?

Caution, you are about to enter a no-spin zone. THE FACTOR begins in 90 seconds

(NEWS BREAK)

BILL O'REILLY, HOST: Hi, I'm Bill O'Reilly. Thanks for watching us tonight. We would like to welcome our new viewers in Flint, Michigan on Comcast Cable. We hope you like THE FACTOR.

The "Talking Points" memo this evening deals with military tribunals and Yasser Arafat, two separate issues. I've given this tribunal thing a lot of thought. Listened with an open mind to both sides. Have come to the conclusion that the tribunals are the right thing to do when it comes to trying suspected foreign terrorists. My reasoning is simple because I'm basically a simple guy.

Anyone serving on a jury, hearing the Usama bin Laden case, for example, would be in danger of a reprisal from fanatics. Anyone testifying against bin Laden or other terrorists would face the same danger. The judge in the case, as well as the prosecutors, could easily become targets.

So an open court hearing is far too dangerous. Since suspected terrorists tried before tribunals are not citizens, they don't have the same rights as Americans. Because this was a war situation and crimes

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against humanity are involved, due process is not mandatory. The al Qaeda terrorists are not criminals. They're enemy soldiers who have committed war crimes. They don't have Miranda rights.

Also, the evidence against suspected terrorists often comes from top secret intercepts and interrogations. Some of that information comes from other governments, who don't want publicity.

Now the Johnnie Cochrans of the world would have no compunction about endangering intelligence operations. But clear-thinking Americans know that's dangerous and that other governments would stop cooperating with the United States fast if they thought their intelligence methods would be made public. So onward, military tribunals, your time has come.

Now for Yasser Arafat. The United States sends him and his so-called Palestinian Authorities about \$100 million a year. What we get for our money is violence and chaos. Arafat can't or won't control Hamas or the Islamic jihad organizations that want to destroy Israel.

So let's stop the charade. If Arafat's 50,000 plus police force can't route out the terrorists and control them, then we should cut off all monetary support. The entire world should have zero tolerance for attacks on civilians. And there should be no buts about it.

Yasser Arafat is interested in keeping power and surviving. He's afraid of the terrorists. He is not a peacemaker. The United States does hold some sway over Israel. We can pressure them to negotiate and give up some land. But we have no influence right now over Hamas and the other fanatics who kill babies and then expect to go heaven.

It's time to destroy Hamas, Hezbollah, Islamic jihad and all the other psychopathic moments. And if Arafat goes down in the process, too bad. And that's a memo.

Now for the top story tonight, an opposing point of view on the Palestinian situation. Joining us now from Washington is Hassan Abdel Rahman, the chief P.L.O. representative to the United Nations. What say you?

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF PLO REPRESENTATIVE: Well, to the United States, sorry, I'm at the United Nations.

O'REILLY: I'm sorry, that was my fault.

RAHMAN: OK. Well, I agree with you on one issue. And that is no one should kill babies and children or civilians, whether those civilians are Americans or they Israelis or Americans or anyone.

We, in the Palestinian Authority, condemn and oppose killing of civilians. And we take action against those who kill civilians. But when our civilians are killed, we do not hear the same outrage from neither Israelis, nor members of the American Jewish community, nor even from governments.

O'REILLY: Yes, but maybe it's because the methods are different. You know...

RAHMAN: No, no.

O'REILLY: If you can point me to one Israeli suicide bomber who put a bomb on a bus or a bomb in a disco or a bomb in an ice cream and blew up indiscriminate people. Now look, every American knows that there have been atrocities on both sides in that conflict. But the fact of the matter is, that you guys, the PLO right now cannot control Hamas or the Islamic jihad. You can't control them. And if you can't, somebody has to.

RAHMAN: Let me respond. First of all, I don't believe that there's good killing of civilians and bad killing of civilians. I think killing of civilians is wrong and bad. Second, occupation of other people is an act of terror. I hope you agree with me.

O'REILLY: Occupation of other -- is that what you said? Occupation?

RAHMAN: Yes.

O'REILLY: All right, but it's a political question as well.

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RAHMAN: No, no, it's not...

O'REILLY: It can be negotiated.

RAHMAN: It is -- but after 35 years of people, Palestinian people, living under military occupation, I guarantee you, Mr. O'Reilly, you cannot live one day under foreign military occupation without revolting and fighting back.

Why, then, we, the Palestinian people have to believe Israeli's occupation of our people, stealing our land, building Jewish settlement.

O'REILLY: Then go to the table and negotiate a settlement.

RAHMAN: Well, of course...

O'REILLY: Fighting back is not bombing cars and restaurants.

RAHMAN: I am not justifying. I'm trying to explain to you, Mr. O'Reilly, what is the situation.

O'REILLY: Everybody knows there are two sides to this story, Mr. Ambassador.

RAHMAN: Yes, of course, but there's one side wrong and one side right.

O'REILLY: Right, but the Israelis are going to say that you encroached upon them.

RAHMAN: When?

O'REILLY: That you did this to them. It's a non ending struggle.

RAHMAN: When did we occupy Israel or they occupied us? Did we build a state on Israel's land or they build a state on Palestinian land?

O'REILLY: Look, the reality of this is that you're going to have to learn to live with each other. OK?

RAHMAN: Of course. But there's one...

O'REILLY: And that's it. So you got two organizations. You've got Hamas, Jihad. They want to kill all Israelis. You guys have to control them. And if you can't, somebody else has to.

RAHMAN: Are you going to give me a little chance?

O'REILLY: I don't want a history lesson, because we've gone over it 1,000 times.

RAHMAN: I'm not giving you a history lesson. Not for you, it is for the audience.

O'REILLY: They know it. They know it.

RAHMAN: That they need to understand the context in which things happen. As I started out by saying, we oppose, we condemn, and we try out. but let me...

O'REILLY: But, there always a but. See, I don't want to hear the butt. You've got to control these people. And if you don't, you're not going to get anything.

RAHMAN: Tonight here, we are trying to explain to the public what's happening. I am saying that today, Israel is bombarding Palestinian civilians. Two little children going to school, carrying their school bags on their back was killed in the middle of the street today by Israel F-16 and Apache helicopters.

O'REILLY: But Mr. Ambassador, you're can make the same argument that America's bombing civilians in Afghanistan, little children going to school, because we're trying to root out the terrorist who live there.

RAHMAN: Yes, sir. But Afghanistan, the United States was not occupying Afghanistan. The United States was not taking the land away from the Afghanis.

O'REILLY: But they attacked us as Hamas has continued to attack Israel.

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RAHMAN: Yes, of course. But sir, you have to remember, those are individuals. When they commit acts of terror, they are individuals.

O'REILLY: But you've got to get him.

RAHMAN: The state of Israel commit an act of terror, it is the Israeli government...

O'REILLY: What do you expect them to do, nothing? Do you expect the Israelis to sit there and let the Hamas people blow their brains out? Come on.

RAHMAN: Mr. Sharon has been killing Palestinians. He made a career out of killing Palestinians.

O'REILLY: All right. So Mr. Arafat has been killing Jews. You can make the same charges on both sides.

RAHMAN: No, sir. No, sir. Mr. Sharon made a career -- Mr. Sharon is the only world leader who's being tried today in Belgium for war crimes against the Palestinians.

O'REILLY: Mr. Rahman, you're a smart guy, all right? And I respect you.

RAHMAN: And you are a smart guy.

O'REILLY: But you know there is no solution to this historical problem. And I'm going to tell you, it comes down now to this. Either your organization has to control and destroy the terrorist organizations that live among your community, or you're toast. You're done. The United States is not going to put up with it anymore, nor should we.

RAHMAN: Mr. O'Reilly, I am telling you, I am ready, and we are ready, and we want to live side by side with the Israelis. We want to live in peace with Israel. We want to have a state next to Israel.

O'REILLY: Then the first step is to get these Hamas people and get them out of there.

RAHMAN: Listen, we will do our share. We want Israel to do its share, too. We are partners. In partnership, one side cannot do the job alone.

O'REILLY: All right, well, why don't you guys and Chairman Arafat use the \$100 million that we Americans send you.

RAHMAN: Which \$100 million?

O'REILLY: Every year.

RAHMAN: We don't receive \$100 million.

O'REILLY: Look, he's got \$400 million for the Y arrangement under President Clinton. Now if you if you don't know where this money's going, I'd like to know about it, because we're sending it to you.

RAHMAN: First of all, we do not receive \$1 in cash from the United States. The United States carry on the building of projects. And it is managed by Americans. It is done by Americans. The Palestinian Authority does not...

O'REILLY: Who do you think has paid for your 50,000-strong police force? We have.

RAHMAN: We paid for it.

O'REILLY: We have. The United States has.

RAHMAN: No, you don't. And ask your government and they will tell you don't. But listen to me.

O'REILLY: One more. I'll give you the last word. But what are you going to do about Hamas?

RAHMAN: We will do what we need to do. We need Israel also to do -- we need to have reciprocity. We need to have positive steps. We need to act in the spirit of partnership.

O'REILLY: All right.

RAHMAN: Mr. Sharon should view Yasser Arafat...



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O'REILLY: I tell you, Mr. Abdel Rahman, you're not going to have the good will of the American people until you root out these bombers and these people.

RAHMAN: We will fight them very strongly.

O'REILLY: Well, we'll watch. And we hope you do.

RAHMAN: We would do that.

O'REILLY: All right. We thank you very much for you coming on THE FACTOR.

RAHMAN: Thank you for having me.

O'REILLY: OK.

Next on the rundown, fighting between the United Way offices over, you guessed it, the September 11 Fund. And later, a librarian reprimanded for giving the FBI information about suicide skyjackers. You won't believe it. We'll be right back.

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BYLINE: Larry King

HIGHLIGHT:

Frank Lindh discusses his son, who is an American, fighting for the Taliban.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

LARRY KING, HOST: Tonight, there's no keeping "CBS News" anchorman Dan Rather tied to a desk. He joins us live from Kabul. Then, how does a 20-year-old American, named John, end up fighting for the Taliban in Afghanistan? We'll have an exclusive one-on-one with his father, Frank Lindh.

Then, Israel strikes back after a bloody series of suicide bombings. We'll talk with Israel's foreign minister, Shimon Peres, as well as the P.L.O.'s chief representative in the United States, Hassan Abdel Rahman.

Plus, Sting with a very special musical performance. They're all next on LARRY KING LIVE.

Good evening, Dan Rather will be with us throughout the entire program tonight, as we break for other guests. We'll start first for a few moments with Dan in Kabul.

Why, Dan? Why are you there?

DAN RATHER, "CBS NEWS": Well, because there's a war on. Americans are involved in the war. It's one of the most important stories of our time. One of the, perhaps the most important story of the early part of the 21st century.

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I think it's important to walk the ground. It's very hard to be credible on something as important as war, and stay in a windowless room on the west side of Manhattan or somewhere in midtown. I couldn't be any other place, Larry.

KING: I thought anchors are supposed to anchor.

RATHER: Well, apparently some anchors think so. I understand that. But this is the era of the mobile anchor. I've always considered myself first and foremost a reporter. I came in to this wanting to be a reporter anchor, all caps reporter, small caps anchor. I have tried to do that over the last 20 years, plus I understand other people have other views. But this is the way I choose to do it.

I can't imagine being anything other than a go there, see it, hear it, feel it, think about it on the ground, kind of reporter/anchor.

KING: What's the biggest difference for you in the 20 years since you've been there?

RATHER: There's enormous difference, Larry. When the Afghans began resisting the Soviet invasion in the 1980s, they had a measure of unity because everybody, whatever their differences, they all agreed they had to repel the Soviets.

Now they are split asunder, and have been for a long while. Let's face it, they have been for some years now, under what amounts to a kind of fascist Islam. So, that's a tremendous difference. There's also much more suffering now. There was great suffering then. I thought at that time I had never never seen as much suffering among children and women. But there's even more now. The country is much more devastated because it went through 20 years of war.

Now, the other big difference is in the way the Afghans fight. The warlords, if we can call them that, and I think we should in some cases, they had a loose unity at the time they got together to fight the Soviets. Now there's an extreme question in my mind whether they have any unity at all.

Now, we with some of our money and a lot of our special forces help in the south around Kandahar, they're helping with the siege of Kandahar and have helped other places in the country. But we should have no illusions, the problem in this country is one of unity. The Afghans don't seem to understand, or if they understand, they are not able to do it, that if they don't have unity, then the surrounding nations, India, Pakistan, Iran and Russia, are always going to be trying to split them asunder and cut them apart. It's very, very sad.

KING: All right, Dan is standing by with us. We'll have him ask questions as well. But right now let's go to San Francisco. Frank Lindh is the father of John Philip Walker Lindh, the 20-year-old United States citizen turned Taliban fighter, taken in to military custody in Afghanistan. This is Frank's first live interview.

What is the story, Frank? What attracted your son to go over?

FRANK LINDH, SON BECAME TALIBAN FIGHTER: Larry, my son was a convert to Islam when he was 16, just in high school age here in California. He attended a Mosque in San Francisco, began to really study in earnest while he was there, and then he went overseas to study Arabic in Yemen, which is a good place to study Arabic because the old form of Arabic is spoken there.

He came back home after about a year in Yemen, then he went back to Yemen to continue his language and religious studies there in Yemen. Then in November of 2000, he went to Pakistan. He was there in a mosque in Pakistan in a city called Bannu from November until May, the first of May this year.

At that point, he had told us he was going to go up to the mountains of Pakistan and spend the summer because of the heat in Bannu during the summer. And with my blessing, he did leave. What we didn't know until Saturday night, was that John apparently went to Afghanistan rather than farther up to the hills of Pakistan.

KING: When, Frank, was the last time had you heard from him?

LINDH: At the first of May, Larry.

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KING: So it was not since May?

LINDH: Not since May. We have been waiting and hoping and praying to hear some word from him since the first of May. It was only Saturday night of this week that we, you know, we all viewed those images on CNN.

KING: Did anything in your mind lend you to think that he might be with them? Anything from a prior correspondence before May, any statements he had made to you that might lend to you think that he would join or be part of that group?

LINDH: No, Larry. John, he's a very sweet kid, very devout, very religious. He is certainly devoted to this religious conversion that he had to Islam. But to me, John was always the same kid. He always had the same sense of humor, the same family relations with his sister and his brother. And so I had no indication or reason to be concerned that he would put himself in danger like this by going to Afghanistan.

KING: What were you thoughts after September 11?

LINDH: Well, our thoughts were very troubled, Larry. We were very concerned because there had been this long period already where we had not heard from John, and now of course we have this, the terrible, terrible tragedy here in the United States. And demonstrations in Pakistan, where we thought John was, against the Americans, so we began to be even more concerned about the lack of any communication, thinking that John might be in some danger there in Pakistan.

KING: Now, Frank, what are you going through? You're obviously overjoyed that your son is alive, you haven't heard from him so you know he's alive. Yet you know, he might be charged with something, right?

LINDH: Well, I don't know, Larry. Our first concern is we want to see John. We want to see him. His mom and I both want to see him. We have hired a lawyer. We're very interested in getting information from the government as to where John is now. Let me say, though, we're also very grateful that the Special Forces picked him up. We know John is safe and we are very grateful for that information. But we do...

KING: But you had no idea what's going to happen to him?

LINDH: No, we have had no information or communication of any kind from the government as yet. We are, though, hoping, hoping to hear from the government.

KING: Have you tried to contact him?

LINDH: Well, no, Larry. I have no idea where he is. My information was that he was taken by the Special Forces. The one reporter on the ground in Afghanistan that I spoke to, the "Newsweek" reporter who broke the story, said he was speculating, but he thought John had been removed from Afghanistan to another country.

KING: What, as you look back and think back, he was raised Catholic, was he not, Frank?

LINDH: Yes.

KING: What took him to this extreme route? We understand being attracted to another faith and many do go to Islam and other type faiths as they move through life. But why this far, do you think?

LINDH: Larry, I really can't answer that without speculating. Until John disappeared on us, so to speak, on the first of May, I had nothing to see there other than a kid who, a boy really, who had converted to a religion that I respect and that seemed very healthy and good for him.

He was very devoted to it, devoted to the intellectual study and the study of Arabic, the memorization of the Koran, even by Islamic standards I think John is an outstanding student, a really devoted student, who ultimately wanted to attend the University at Medina, in Saudi Arabia. And I supported that, I thought that was a noble thing, and I was proud of John for pursuing that alternative course. Different, certainly, from where I grew up.



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KING: Boy, now, when the Cole was bombed, is it true you that you expressed displeasure with that and he did not?

LINDH: Yes, Larry. We did have a difference of political views on that issue. John, I was upset and I was concerned about the fact that these young Americans who were killed on the Cole were the same age as John. And we just had a little father/son debate, much like my dad and I used to have over Vietnam war, frankly. We had a father/son disagreement on that issue.

KING: Are there other children, Frank?

LINDH: Yes, we have three children. John is the middle child.

KING: What do the other two do?

LINDH: I have a son here in San Francisco, who is 23 years old. He works in a record store. And our daughter Naomi is a 7th grader.

KING: And your wife is at home, or does she work too?

LINDH: She works part-time, and we're actually, at Larry, in the midst of an amicable divorce, so we're separated.

KING: How are the two siblings handling this?

LINDH: Well, I have to say, I'm doing my best to remain composed, but we're all very, very upset with what John went through in this prison. It really defies description. And to think that our son, he's really not much more than a boy, that he went through this horrible experience in the prison and who knows what leading up to that, as parents and as family, we're very troubled and very concerned for his welfare.

And that's why we're -- go ahead.

KING: I'm sorry.

LINDH: I was going to say, that's why we're so anxious to see him as soon as possible. We want to give him a big hug and make a little kick in the butt for not telling me what he was up to, and for not getting my permission, because I would not have given him permission to go to Afghanistan.

KING: All right, what do you, what are your expectations the government is going to do?

LINDH: I don't know, Larry. I spoke with an attorney today. I have hired the attorney to represent John. I hope the government recognizes that John does deserve to have representation. But John is a good boy. I don't know of any information, any suggestion of any information indicating that he's done anything wrong. Therefore, I hope that John can be debriefed by the government and then come on home.

KING: There's no indication, thus far, that he was doing anything militarily with the Taliban.

LINDH: Larry, I know only what I have seen on CNN and on, on- line. It does indicate in those reports, this is hard for me to reconcile with the John that I know, but he was carrying an AK-47, according to one story.

So he appears to have been a combatant with the Taliban.

KING: Frank, before you leave us, Dan Rather is in Kabul. Dan, do you have a question for Frank?

RATHER: I do, Larry. I've been listening very carefully. Let me first of all say, that any father can certainly relate to what Frank is feeling. But Frank, you said your son had done nothing wrong. He's been quoted as saying that he supported and supports the attacks of September 11. Whether there's anything legally wrong with that or not, there are going to be many, many Americans, I have to say candidly this one, who would say that for whatever reason he said that, that that was wrong. I would like to get your reaction to that.

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LINDH: Dan, I'm very troubled by that statement as well. I would just ask you to consider the fact that he was being pressed by a reporter after being pulled out of the basement of a prison where he went through that horrible ordeal.

All I can say is that I don't think his mind was working, I don't think he was thinking straight at that moment. I don't think anybody could be thinking straight after that kind of an ordeal.

KING: Sad stories of war. You just ask what, Frank?

LINDH: Ask that people have a little mercy, and think about what he went through before he made that statement.

KING: Thank you, Frank.

LINDH: Thank you.

RATHER: Frank, I think you know that Americans are filled with mercy, thanks.

LINDH: Thank you, Dan, very much.

KING: We'll be right back with Dan Rather from Kabul on this edition of LARRY KING LIVE. Don't go away.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOHN WALKER, TALIBAN FIGHTER: I was a student in Pakistan, studying Islam and I came in to contact with many people who were connected with the Taliban. I lived in the region, in the northwest frontier province. The people there in general have a great love for the Taliban. So I started to read some of the literature of the scholars and of the history of the movement and just thought, my heart became attached to them.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We are back with Dan Rather in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Any idea, Dan, how long you're going to stay?

RATHER: No, Larry. It's day by day. But I'm going to be here for a while. I tell you, Larry, the whole trip has been worth it to me to talk to these really outstanding American young people who are in the service here.

I've been at this big old Russian air base outside, Bagram Air Base, outside of Kabul for the last couple days talking to our young men and women in the 10th Mountain Division, U.S. Army soldiers. And the whole trip over here has been worth it to talk to them, get a sense of what they think their mission is, how they're going to carry it out, how they feel about it. I really don't know how long I want to stay, but I'm here for a while.

KING: They are saying this is the first war ever where the servicemen worry about the people back home. And today, as you probably know, Governor Ridge issued another alert, to be on the alert for possible threats here. What are your thoughts on these continuing alert statements?

RATHER: Well, I take them at face value, Larry. It's very hard for me to conceive how any American would think otherwise. Yes, it's frustrating to have alerts sounded and then have nothing happen. On the other hand, that's a blessing. I think Americans understand, this is a war. This is a real war. There's nothing phony about this war. There is nothing peripheral about this war, that we have it all on the table in this war.

We found that out on September 11. And let me mention, Larry, that I haven't been surprised, but it's been satisfying to get the sense, I have yet to speak to a young American soldier or anybody in our service who doesn't know why they are here. They have September 11 right up here, all the time. A lot of them have it on their sleeve, all of them have it in their heart. And they know why they're here. And I think

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they would agree when you say look, we're in danger over here and they are in great danger, no one should misread the rather promising headlines about this war and say well, it's nearly over, and our troops are -- they're in some danger but not much. None of that is true.

But also we Americans are in danger at home. We Americans are in danger at home. We are in danger of something akin to September 11 happening again. We pray it doesn't happen. But we have to be ready and we have to steel ourselves. It's time for us to toughen up. I think we are in the process of doing that. It is going to be a long war. Patience and understanding is required.

KING: Last time you were us with, you told us how much you admired the people of Afghanistan, the kind of people they were, how friendly they were. Have they changed and what is their mood now?

RATHER: Well, they have not, at base, changed, Larry, and it is true, I'm a great admirer of the Afghan people as a whole. They have characteristics which are compatible with the characteristics of Americans. I'm speaking now of the rank and file, the average Afghan.

First, they are a very brave people, as they indicated over the last 20 years. They live by a code of hospitality, honor and revenge. That last one sometimes gets them in a lot of trouble and leads to a lot of suffering on their part. But they are, they're capable on a very personal level, I was in the home of an Afghan family yesterday, the children especially, love America. They know things about Americans that I don't even know myself, things about movies and music and that sort of thing.

The question is the question that has plagued them for so many years, and that is can they get any semblance of unity to hold themselves together, to keep them from being continually just ripped apart by other world powers?

KING: Apparently they got some sort of an agreement today in Germany. A U.N. spokesman has told agents France, agence France, that the Afghans agreed on an interim government plan. How do you react?

RATHER: Very skeptically, to be perfectly honest with you, Larry. I'm hopeful that that can hold together. But everything we know about Afghan history, particularly the recent history, tells us how hard that's going to be. The deal, thus far, has been put together under immense pressure from the United States among others, but particularly the United States.

Because these factions were arguing among one another, it was bordering on chaos, maybe even anarchy. However, the public face was put on it. Now, the tentative arrangement is, they appoint an interim cabinet, so to speak, of 20-some odd members. That interim cabinet is to come in to Afghanistan, take over what there is of the government now, being run by the so-called Northern Alliance, and that that interim government would take over and prepare the way for Democratic elections next spring.

But let me say, Larry, on the basis of today's reports and these up to the minute reports, and what I know about Afghanistan, that deal is going to be extremely hard to hold together. I don't say it can't be, but I will say it's going to be extremely difficult to hold it together. All you have to do is walk the streets of Kabul, and talk to people through interpreters and otherwise to know how difficult that deal is going to be to hold in.

KING: We have an enormous humanitarian problem coming. There are stories that tens of thousands could die this winter.

RATHER: No question about it, Larry. Those stories are true. I mentioned it earlier in the program, and I mention it again to underscore it. What's happened to, particularly the children and the women of this country, but to the population as a whole really, is unimaginable to most Americans. They have been at war 20 years. These last four, five years have been particularly difficult on civilians caught in the middle.

Winter is coming on. The humanitarian aid effort, which everybody, including those in Washington keep talking about, has yet to materialize. The 10th Mountain Division is trying to hurry up with this big airbase outside of Kabul to help build a sort of ground zero pipeline for the relief effort. But it's a race against time, and I will say on the streets of Kabul and out in the country side, where we have been quite a

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bit these last few days, Afghans, while prizing the United States for helping come in and rid Afghanistan of the Taliban, are asking a lot of questions about why is the humanitarian aid so slow in coming?

They don't say it in an arrogant way, they don't say it in any sense of, well, we deserve it, it's just they're begging, and that is very hard for Afghans to do, to beg. But they are begging and they know this winter is going to be tough unless that humanitarian pipeline gets open and gets opened in a hurry.

KING: Eight reporters have been killed. Does that give you some pause?

RATHER: Sure. I wouldn't be honest if I didn't say of course it gives me pause and to be candid, you think about it a lot. And I have those journalists very much in mind. There's some indications, no proof, some indications, Larry, that at least one journalist who was killed in Jalalabad was killed by the Taliban, not for money, not for his equipment, but as an act of just terror against that journalist.

But you know, if you're going to be a reporter and not just play one on TV, then you have to take risks. And particularly when American young people are putting their lives on the line, as members of our service, then I can say perhaps if one of those few times an anchor would say the story is not about me, it's not about my worries about danger.

There is some danger here, I do think about it, you just put -- get through it, because the story is worth it.

KING: We'll be right back with more of Dan Rather, one of the great journalists. Later, Shimon Peres will join us. Also Mr. Rahman returns, as a spokesman for the P.L.O. We are going to close the show with a musical performance by Sting. By the way, Don Rumsfeld, the secretary of defense will be our special guest on Wednesday night in Washington.

We'll be right back with Dan after this.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

RATHER (voice-over): We met Mohammed Hassan on this mine-working crew. He has survived 23 straight years of war, and wants to make his homeland safe.

(on camera): Does he think he can stay alive now with this mine-clearing work?

(voice-over): It depends on God, Mohammed tells me. If he wants to us die, we die. And many have.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KING: In a little while we'll be talking with Shimon Peres, the foreign minister of Israel. We'll get Dan's thoughts on that as well, of course.

Dan rather is with us from Kabul, Afghanistan. Have you run in to any Russians?

RATHER: Yes, Larry, I'm glad you mention it. I think the Russians involvement in what's going on in Afghanistan now is a vastly underreported story. No. 1, the Russians had a full division, I think it was called the 201st, at least an armored division right on the border of Afghanistan, and units of that division and other Russian troops have been very much involved in what's been happening lately, but they have kept themselves as much as possible out of sight.

There are reports, I have not been able to confirm them, but there are reports that I do believe that what amounts to Russian special forces are, have been operating for some time now even south of Kabul in the effort to make Kandahar fall. And the Russians rushed in here with a humanitarian aid operation.

They beat the Americans in here and nearly everybody else with humanitarian aid setup. In fact just across this wall from where I'm talking, the Russians have their version of a tent city, and have started their humanitarian aid operation. This is an official Russian government operation as I understand it. So they're very much involved here. What they are doing, Larry, is the Russians are dealing themselves a hand and they want to deal themselves a very big hand in what happens in Afghanistan next.

By the way, they have already opened their embassy where our State Department is saying, well, we may have the embassy open in two weeks to a month or something like that. Now, I think part of what

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the United States State Department is doing is sending a signal to the Afghans, look, we're not trying to impose our will on you. And of course, there's a lot of animosity in this country with the Russians because of what happened during the 1980s.

KING: And are the Russians trying to change that? Is this a different kind of Russia in there than was there years ago?

RATHER: Yes, this is a smiling bear. That's the reason they are placing, their whole emphasis is on humanitarian aid. They are keeping --their military operations have been almost virtually secret. I did see a sign yesterday, in fact, I saw three signs yesterday, Larry, in and around Kabul, scribbled signs, sort of graffiti, that said polar bear, go home.

The inference could not be any clearer, that this Afghans who wrote that want the Russians to go back up north. But the Russians are dealing themselves a very big hand here, they, along with the Iranians, Pakistanis, Indians, they're all going to be involved in the future of Afghanistan and that's one of the things that worries the Afghans the most just now.

KING: How, Dan, has the news about Israel the past 24, 36, 48 hours been received where you are?

RATHER: There's so much focus on the war, and what's happening in this country, Larry, that there hasn't been much attention on what's happened in the Middle East, in Afghanistan at large.

Remember, there's no television worth of the name here, no television news. Very little radio news of any kind, other than what comes in from the outside. Newspapers are virtually non-existent. So Afghans in general don't know what has happened in the Middle East. Among academics and others who, in the general populous, who listen to things like BBC radio and the Voice of America, they're aware of it.

But it remains, for them, very far away. They don't talk about it much, they don't think about it much. A few Afghans mentioned to me, sort of saying along the lines of, well, these Arab fighters who are putting up such a fierce defense of Kandahar, and caused so much trouble in Afghanistan, many of them come from that region over there, over there meaning, Palestine, Egypt, Yemen, Saudi Arabia.

But Afghans, they're a very insular people, they don't know much about the outside world. Very few of them know what's happened in the Middle East, and even fewer of them know how it will effect them, if at all.

KING: Is there a lot of talk about bin Laden? And have you run into people who might be looking for that bounty?

RATHER: There are a lot of folks looking for that bounty. The kind of money, the last time I checked it was something like \$25 million and headed upward, there are a lot of people interested in it, but not many people are talking realistically about being able to find bin Laden.

I have talked to a number of high ranking members of the Northern Alliance government here including the foreign minister, and they are absolutely convinced that Osama bin Laden is still in the country. Most of them believe that he is probably in the mountains west of Kandahar, and if, Larry, if you wanted to keep ahead of the news, I think you might look to those mountains west of Kandahar as the next big focal point in the war.

So that's where they think he is, somewhere there. Clearly, the United States government believes that he may still be in one of those caves in and around Jalalabad, which is in the eastern part of the country, as you know over near Pakistan. That's one reason U.S. bombing has been particularly heavy there, in addition to in Kandahar, because they just continue to think Osama bin Laden might be there.

Now what the United States has been doing in the last 48 to 72 hours is organizing some allied Afghan peoples, if you will, some local Afghans who are willing to do it, to go into some of those areas, the Tora Bora cave, for example, and see if they can find Osama bin Laden. Some of the locals around Jalalabad believe he is there.

In 1980, Larry, when I was here in Afghanistan covering the war against the Soviets, I was in some of those caves with the mujahedeen, the then anti-Soviet fighters. And I can tell you that some of those



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caves run back for many, many miles. It's a version of Carlsbad Caverns, if you will. And if Osama bin Laden is in such a cave, it'll be very, very difficult to find him and extremely difficult to root him out, even with the technology that we have.

KING: How much moving around are you doing?

RATHER: Well, as much as I can, Larry. That in and around Kabul, we're able to move, you know, fairly freely. We always have to keep in mind the safety factor. You know, I've often said I was raised by people who taught me to fear only two things, God and hurricanes.

But I have to add to that, for whatever reason, I know from my past war experience, that one needs to be particularly afraid in this kind of situation of mines, snipers and booby traps. Now we have to add to that, no sense of overemphasizing, but in terms of traveling around, that some journalists have been victimized.

But we've traveled around quite a little bit. I've tried to concentrate on talking to our troops. I have been able to talk to the 10th mountain soldiers, tried very hard to get with the U.S. Marines. And well, that's another story for another day. Wasn't able to do it. But we can move around. In Kabul itself, no difficulty. In the countryside at large, you always have to factor in the risk factor.

KING: We'll get a break and come back. We'll talk with Shimon Peres. We'll get Dan's reaction to that. Talk with the top P.L.O. representative, get Dan's reaction to that, too. You're watching LARRY KING LIVE. We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We're back. Dan Rather remains with us from Kabul.

This just in. After more than five hours of closed door talks, the Israeli cabinet early Tuesday called the Palestinian Authority a terrorist supporting entity. Israel took aim at P.L.O. targets earlier today, following a deadly series of attacks. In that regard, we spoke earlier with Shimon Peres, shortly after those attacks. He is Israel's foreign minister. This was before the news about the cabinet. So my first question this morning was, is P.L.O. chief Yasser Arafat now considered an enemy by Israel?

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

SHIMON PERES, ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER: The difference can be done by Arafat himself. He has a problem, which is not necessarily limited to his relations with Israel. He has to decide how the Palestinian camps, each of them armed with rifles, or are they one camp and one address?

What's happening right now is that they have four different organizations, each of them shooting in a different direction. And the problem will affect the future of the Palestinians. They cannot go on like it. He has to decide not if he's a partner or an enemy, but if he's a leader or not. Because if he will be a leader just of a small fraction of the Palestinian life, he will hardly be able to manage his affairs.

KING: And how then, will you know what he decides to do? Must he state to it you? What must he do to satisfy Israel?

PERES: To outlaw the other three organizations that have arms and bombs and use them. Then to arrest the troublemakers of the Palestinians, and to arrest them seriously, and try to prevent further acts of violence and terror. Because we are a little bit uneasy, shall I say, disquieted, because we have still a list of warnings that some more acts of terror may take place in the future. If he wants to be a partner and a leader, he has to take the necessary steps, clear and right away.

KING: Do the people of Israel support the actions of the prime minister earlier today?

PERES: I would think so. You know, we were careful not to kill people, but to hit material. Metals and cement, there are no casualties. And in many ways, this is more of a warning than a military operation. It's a warning to Arafat telling him, take the situation in your own hands and respond to the real problems.

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KING: The prime minister said today that Mr. Arafat is responsible for everything that is happening. Do you share that view?

PERES: In a way, yes. He's the chairman of the Palestinian Authority, so he carries responsibility for whatever is taking place in the land which is under his jurisdiction. And we expect him to be responsible also for the security of the people who are there and to the people who are becoming the victims of some of these terrorists against infiltrating into Israel.

KING: Mr. Foreign minister, according to the Israeli press "Ha'aretz Daily," Palestinian officials made a phone call to you and asked for a four-day grace period, asking you not to retaliate for four days while they can take action. Is that true? And if true, why didn't you agree to that?

PERES: Well, they asked for 76 hours. It's not just a matter of four days, it's a little bit less. They have had already quite a few days, two days and more. And what happened today should not stop them from continuing to do what they started to do. Because as I have said, no casualties was caused to the Palestinians.

The warning was needed. And they should continue for their own good and for their own destinies to put things in order. They cannot let the different groups run wild in the territories and out of them. They don't serve Israel. They serve themselves by putting order in their areas.

KING: One of the problems, as the world looks at it, Mr. Foreign minister, is Israel retaliates, then they retaliate. Then you retaliate. Then they retaliate. And so the moderates on both sides have no voice. How do you respond?

PERES: The response is very simple, Israel never initiates, always reacts. It's not a matter of retaliation. They have nothing to retaliate against. The minute they will stop to initiate terror, Israel will gladly become an unemployed country. We shall not go to retaliate. It doesn't give us any pleasure. It doesn't solve any of our aims or inclinations.

KING: You don't agree then with the P.L.O. representatives who say that Mr. Sharon is silencing the voices of moderation by these actions, that he is encouraging those who are on the far edges?

PERES: I think Mr. Sharon has declared publicly that he wants to bring peace. And he has to be true to his promise. And I think that Mr. Sharon, like all of us, are in a serious search to see where can we reconcile? Where can we bring peace?

We are not the enemies of the Palestinians. We have nothing against them. On the contrary, we'd like to see them in an independent state, a state of their own, flourishing economically and being a good neighbor. Nothing can be better for Israel than to have a good neighbor and live in peace with us. We don't want to rule them. And we don't want to control them.

KING: Are there more attacks on your part coming?

PERES: Well, you know, those are the sorts of question that nobody can answer.

KING: Do you fear more retaliation from the other side?

PERES: We have warnings. We are trying to prevent further actions. And if we will do it, I don't see many reasons why we should continue with counteractions. But I pray to the Lord that terror will really stop for the benefit of our two peoples.

KING: Were you consulted before Israel took that action today? Or did Sharon do that independent of the cabinet?

PERES: No, there was a meeting of what we call the kitchenette. This is a reduced cabinet in size. And the proposals were brought before that cabinet.

KING: And therefore, we can assume that you agreed with them?

PERES: You can assume whatever you want. Usually we don't tell how the votings are taking place in the cabinet.



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KING: But certainly once it's decided...

PERES: But...

KING: ...you are defending it?

PERES: Yes, right. Once it's decided, I carry a collective responsibility with my other colleagues.

KING: Does the United States, Mr. foreign minister, have a role now?

PERES: Very much so, because one of the two and three most important ways to bring an end to terror is to tell Mr. Arafat and the Palestinians that the United States and Europe can no longer support the way he acts or avoid acting against terror. He is looking for international intimacy. And American position is of the highest importance to them.

So the position taken by the president of the United States, which was clear-cut and the Secretary of State, is really trying to have a certain impact upon the Palestinian position.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KING: When we come back, we'll get some thoughts of Dan Rather and of Hassan Abdel Rahman, the P.L.O.'s chief representative in the United States. Don't go away.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We are pressed for time here. So before we get some final thoughts from Dan Rather, we have with us in Washington, Hassan Abdel Rahman. He's the P.L.O.'s chief representative in the United States. What are your thoughts on what the foreign minister just said?

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, P.L.O. CHIEF REPRESENTATIVE: I'm really troubled by what I heard from Mr. Shimon Peres, because I had expected him to not endorse the policies of Mr. Sharon. We know where Mr. Sharon stands, but Mr. Shimon Peres, we thought he held different positions.

First of all, Mr. Peres made the false statement that the problem we have with Israel is only over the last two weeks. He did not say that our problem with Israel is over the 35 years of military occupation forced on the Palestinian people by Israel, denied the Palestinians, I mean, denied their very basic human and political rights and robbed of their dignity, freedom, right of self-determination and their livelihood through the process of building Jewish settlement in Palestinian territories.

This is really the original sin. This is the cause of all the troubles. Definitely Yasser Arafat has been trying to bring under control the violence. But in order to achieve that, he needs two things.

One is logistics. How can Yasser Arafat move his forces, his security forces, as if every single city and town in the West Bank is encircled by Israel? How can Yasser Arafat muster in a political support when his people are starving? 50 percent are unemployed, due to the collective punishment imposed by the government of Mr. Sharon on the Palestinian people. When 28 Jewish settlements were built in the last nine months alone. So I mean...

KING: I don't mean to cut you, but we have a time problem here. I only got a couple minutes left. And we will certainly do a lot more on this and have you back, because we got a little thrown in time here tonight. You certainly agree that the acts the other day were wrong?

RAHMAN: Oh, absolutely. I agree we condemn them. And Yasser Arafat took the unprecedented steps of declaring emergency state in the territories, arrested 200 people, but what was the response? Attacks today by F-16 Apache helicopters against civilian population, against cities. Gaza is a city where one million people live.

KING: And you are now called a terrorist supporting entity by the cabinet?

RAHMAN: Yes, and that is, I assure you, not encouraging to the Palestinian Authority. And this is a position that's going to be very difficult to defend within the Palestinian community.

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KING: Mr. Rahman, we will have you back. I'm sorry, we got so limited on time, but we will definitely have you back. It's always good having you with us.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

KING: Because we want to spend this last minute and a half with Dan Rather in Kabul. Dan, you've been covering this for a long, long time, what we just talked about. What's your thought on all of it?

RATHER: Well, the focus now has to be on Saudi Arabia. The United States has to have more help from Saudi Arabia to get, have any chance of a reduction in the violence. I think many Americans don't understand the strong role the Saudis have played in all of this. They have to play a stronger role now. That's where the emphasis will go.

Behind that, Iran and Iraq remain enormous problems, in terms of trying to scale down the violence in that part of the world. It's a very difficult time to have much optimism about this, Larry.

KING: Dan, where you off to today? We have 30 seconds.

RATHER: Well, I want to go back out and talk to my new friends among the 10th Army Mountain Division. Still trying to get with the Marines down south. Watching the siege of Kandahar very closely. Kandahar and this airport could fall at any moment. But we know that the out of country Arab fighters who are in there are the key to that. And they vowed to fight to the death. I take them at their word.

KING: Dan, always good having you with us. God speed, be well, we'll keep in constant touch and we'll watch you all the time.

RATHER: Thank you, Larry.

KING: Dan Rather in Kabul, Afghanistan.

We're going to close it out tonight with a live performance right here in our studios by one of the great artists in the world, the incredible Sting is next. Don't go away.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We welcome to LARRY KING LIVE, great pleasure to have him back, the singer, songwriter, musician, the world famous Sting has gathered us here in our Los Angeles studios. Thanks so much. You were in Tuscany on September 11?

STING, SINGER: I was. I was actually making a live album in my backyard. And I had 300 guests from all over the world. And about an hour before we were to go on, we heard the news. And it wasn't an easy gig. It wasn't the gig we prepared, but we had to alter the performance. And so the album really is dedicated respectfully to those who lost their lives.

KING: This is the new album "All This Time."

STING: Called "All This Time."

KING: Now you -- this song you're going to sing tonight, "Fragile," was the one song you did record that day, right?

STING: It's true. It was a big Web cast. And I agreed. I didn't want to sing at all, frankly. And so, I agreed to sing the song because I thought the sentiment was the right one for the day. And I asked for a minute's silence at the end of that performance. And then we shut down the web cast as a token of respect.

KING: Was it not difficult to work at all that day?

STING: I didn't want to sing, but I put a democratic vote to the band. And they said we have to. This is what musicians do, we play. Besides, you have all of these guests who clearly need some kind of help, some kind of human interaction, some kind of therapy. And music can help. So it was them that convinced me that I should do it.

KING: Were appearances canceled after that?

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STING: I canceled about three shows after that and my birthday party. But there was no way out of this one. So I went ahead and did it.

KING: And are you making appearances now?

STING: Oh, yes.

KING: Are you back on?

STING: Yes, we're back on schedule. I mean, I'm still flying planes and going around the world.

KING: Do you talk about this though in appearances? Do you deal with September 11?

STING: Yes, I think I'm forced to, really. I think we all are. I think it's going to be interesting how it alters the creative process. And I'm not sure how it will alter, but I think it will.

KING: Here is the great Sting -- there's no other word that applies to him -- and "Fragile."

(MUSIC, STING, "FRAGILE")

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Tomorrow night, we're in Washington with Sebastian Younger, the author of "The Perfect Storm," just back from Afghanistan. The Duchess of York, she and her charity took quite a hit. Their offices were in the World Trade Center.

Right now, it's time for NEWSNIGHT and Aaron Brown in New York. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT [www.fdch.com](http://www.fdch.com)

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BYLINE: Donna Kelley

HIGHLIGHT:

PLO Representative to the United Nations Hassan Abdel Rahman and Israeli spokesman Alon Pinkas discuss the recent violence in the Middle East and its effects on the peace process.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

DONNA KELLEY, CNN ANCHOR: Let's get more reactions to this wave of deadly Middle East violence and some perspective on the prospects for peace in this highly charged atmosphere. We are joined now from New York by Hassan Abdel Rahman. He's chief PLO representative to the United Nations. Mr. Rahman, good to have you join us again. Thank you very much.

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF PLO REP. TO U.N.: Thank you.

KELLEY: Can you tell us any more about the arrests that we're hearing about now, 50 in custody, 150 more by Monday morning that Mr. Arafat is talking about?

RAHMAN: Well, the Palestinian Authority is taking a very unprecedented drastic measures to bring the perpetrators of those tragic events in the last two days to justice, and control the violence.

But I must reiterate that those measures by themselves are not going to succeed unless there is a change in the behavior of the Israeli army and the Israeli government in the Palestinian territories. If Israel continues its assassination policy of community and political leaders, if it continues its settlement activities in the territories, if it continues the siege of the Palestinian towns and villages, making the life of the Palestinian people impossible -- this is not going to be conducive toward the kind of environment that is needed for us to succeed in our effort.

KELLEY: President Bush has said...

RAHMAN: We need Israeli cooperation.

KELLEY: President Bush has said that no cause justifies the action that has happened. And you talk about life being made impossible, how do you fix that without resorting to violence?

RAHMAN: What I'm saying is, I am not trying to justify. I'm trying here to explain the environment that has been created by Israel over the last 35 years, and in particular in the last 14 months, where more than 1,000 Palestinians were killed.

This is not the kind of behavior of Israel that is conducive toward constructive behavior. We are calling on Israel to stop treating the Palestinians as a security issue, because this is not a security issue. This is an issue that has to do with three million people living under foreign military occupation. You cannot enslave three million people for 35 years and not expect them to react.

Therefore, we are interested in bringing this cycle of violence to an end...

KELLEY: And what do you want to do? What are you going to do to help that along?

RAHMAN: We are -- what the Authority is doing is to arrest those who are responsible. It took the drastic measure of the state of emergency. It declared anyone who would take any action similar to that an outlaw, he and his organization. But we want simple steps from the Israeli side so we can succeed in our effort and go back to the negotiating table.

Let me warn here that if Mr. Sharon uses those tragic and horrific events as a pretext for him to implement his agenda in the West Bank and Gaza by increasing Jewish settlements and continuing his aggression against the Palestinians, none of us is going to succeed, neither Mr. Sharon or the Authority, in trying to achieve an end to violence.

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KELLEY: Mr. Rahman, there are those who have wondered out-loud whether or not Chairman Arafat has the power to control all of the groups. Some say that's impossible. You could never have control over everyone. But can he get things under control and stop the violence so that you can get back to the negotiating table?

RAHMAN: In order to achieve that, Yasser Arafat is the elected leader of the Palestinian people. He has prestige and he has power. There are two difficulties that he is facing. One is logistical, because remember that the Palestinian territories are under Israeli occupation. The Israeli army is in every single town and village of the West Bank and Gaza, cutting off roads, making it impossible to move the Palestinian security forces from one area to the other.

Adding to that that in the last 14 months Israel has targeted the Palestinian police stations and the security apparatus of the Palestinian Authority, thus debilitating the ability of the Palestinian police to carry on its functions.

The second is political. Through the practices of Israel, through the aggression committed by the Israeli army and the brutality of the Israeli army in the Palestinian territory, there is a great deal of anger, frustration. Those two issues need to be addressed so Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority can do the job.

KELLEY: Hassan Abdel Rahman, who is the chief PLO representative to the United States, we're very thankful for your time today. Thanks very much.

RAHMAN: Thank you. Thank you very much.

KELLEY: And now for Israeli reaction to the bombings and some insight into what's next for the peace process, we have actually confirmed that Prime Minister Sharon has convened an emergency cabinet meeting for tomorrow.

Mr. Pinkas, we're glad to have you join us as well. Thanks very much. You are the Israeli Consul General to New York.

ALON PINKAS, ISRAELI CONSUL GENERAL TO NEW YORK: Yes. Thank you, Donna.

KELLEY: You just heard Mr. Rahman. He said that, you know, Mr. Arafat has declared a state of emergency. They have these arrests now. They're doing what they can, but they need some reciprocal behavior and a change of behavior from Israel.

PINKAS: Yes, well, Mr. Rahman is a habitual liar to the extent that it's just unbelievable.

KELLEY: What's he lying about?

PINKAS: That they -- I'll tell you exactly in a second, Donna. The day after three suicide bombers murder 25 people, he expects Israeli to reciprocate. He expects Israel to do this. He expects Israel to exercise that, etcetera, etcetera.

Now, let me tell you something, Donna. We have submitted to Arafat a list of 114 names which then became a list of 108 suspected terrorists from the Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, and some from Mr. Arafat's own Fatah Movement. They have not arrested one of them.

So, if this morning Mr. Arafat arrested tens of them, one, he is either lying. Possibility number two, they were all known and their whereabouts have been known to the Palestinian security organs, and the question is, then, why have they not been arrested in the last year?

KELLEY: Well, if they're working on the arrests now and they've declared a state of emergency, are they trying to get things under control? With the 50 arrests they say they've made now, and 150 by Monday morning?

PINKAS: Well, first of all, the term arrest, you have to understand, all your viewers, I think, understand by now, that the term arrest in the United States of America and the term arrest in the Palestinian Authority is not even in the same language, not to mention has the same meaning.

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Arrest usually means what we call a revolving door hotel arrest. Someone is being locked in his house for several hours, uses the phone, meets people, invites people, goes down, goes out of the apartment, rather, to continue on his business of terrorism.

Now, I have not heard that the Palestinian authority did in fact arrest tens of people. And I'm very surprised. This is what I mean when I said that he's lying about. Mr. Abdel Rahman has absolutely no idea about anyone that's being arrested.

Now, these suicide, these steps that have been taken in response, supposedly, to the suicide attempt, clarify two things and expose two things. One, that this indeed was an action condoned by the Palestinian Authority in order to subvert and disrupt the mission of General Zinni and Assistant Secretary of State Burns, and that is why the administration and indeed the America public is so angry at the Palestinians.

Number two, I think they are just frightened of the repercussions. They have condoned terrorism for a year. This is a culture that manufactures suicide bombers. This is the same culture of anti-Israeli and anti-American sentiments. This is the same political culture that bred Osama bin Laden, and their bluff should be called.

KELLEY: Mr. Pinkas, you heard Mr. Rahman probably say with the settlements and the incursions and seizing towns and yesterday he said to me that, in an interview, that when people are hungry and jobless and you take their land, they're hard to control. And today he said that the Israelis have made life impossible for the Palestinians.

PINKAS: Yes, well, in order to address that, and in order to fix that, and because we think that he has a point in terms of the 35 years of anomaly that exist, we have convened a summit. It was called Camp David last year. It was convened by then-president Bill Clinton. A proposal was being put on the table that would have ended occupation, eliminated the closures, eliminated hunger, found economic solutions, and would have provided the Palestinians with an independent state and full sovereignty.

In fact, the Palestinians that have been killed in the last year as a result of Palestinian violence have all been killed in areas that would have been part of the Palestinian state had they said yes at Camp David. But there was one guest at Camp David, Donna, that never showed up and never said yes, and that's Mr. Arafat. And the only thing he knows how to do is to call for an emergency situation after people, who are coming from areas that he controls, being supported by organizations that he controls, perpetrate these acts of terrorism and suicide.

KELLEY: And as you can image, we try to keep your time equal, so we must leave it there. Alon Pinkas, who is the consul general of Israel to New York, our thanks to you and we appreciate you talking to us today.

PINKAS: Thank you, Donna. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT [www.fdch.com](http://www.fdch.com)

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Three Explosions Devastate Pedestrian Shopping Mall in Jerusalem CNN December 1, 2001 Saturday



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SHOW: CNN BREAKING NEWS 19:49

December 1, 2001 Saturday

Transcript # 120109CN.V00

SECTION: News; International

LENGTH: 1496 words

HEADLINE: Three Explosions Devastate Pedestrian Shopping Mall in Jerusalem

GUESTS: Hasan Abdel Rahman, Avi Zohar

BYLINE: Leon Harris

HIGHLIGHT:

Three explosions devastated a pedestrian shopping mall in downtown Jerusalem, killing at least six and wounding over 150 others. Two of the explosions were caused by suicide bombers, and the third was a car bomb designed to go off when emergency workers arrived on the scene.

BODY:

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(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I saw like maybe more than 40 or 50 people on the floor. That's all I saw. A lot of blood around, all the shops broke up, the windows, the cars, everything around just gone.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

LEON HARRIS, CNN ANCHOR: Everything around is gone, because of three explosions that we've been reporting it to you this evening coming in out of Jerusalem, the downtown area known as Zion Square. This evening, the area was packed with revelers there out enjoying a late evening. This happened around midnight or so local time.

You are seeing here videotape that we've gotten from Israeli TV of the third explosion. And the reason why we're able to show the videotape of the explosion is because it happened so late after the first two, and it is believed that it was timed to injure those who had arrived to help those who were injured by the first two explosions.

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The latest numbers on the casualties that we've gotten, these numbers have been climbing throughout evening. We have now up to 170 who have been listed as casualties and hospitalized. And of those numbers, we understand 11 are in critical condition right now, perhaps to be said to be holding onto their lives right now just barely.

And we also have heard of eight who have lost their lives. That's 170 casualties and 8 dead right now in the wake of these three explosions happening outside of what is described to us as an outdoor pedestrian mall -- an open area that featured some cafes and ice cream shops, that sort of thing. And we understand that the explosion did happen -- the first explosion happened just outside of an open-air cafe there in the area.

The area, we understand, is one that's frequented by a lot of young people on late Saturday nights, as tonight was. And sure enough, we have reports that many of those who are among the casualties were many teens and those in their 20s.

And we have been talking throughout the evening now from a different perspective, getting more ideas about what may actually happen from here on out. We've gotten some word from the White House -- strong words from the White House condemning Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority for not having done enough to quash terrorism in Jerusalem and in Israel.

We are joined now by Palestinian representative, Hassan Abdel Rahman, who has been -- I hope has been listening to some of these comments that we've heard. Have you been listening, sir?

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO U.S.: I have been listening to your comments and the comments of Mr. Tesso (ph) and the comments of Israeli spokespeople from New York as well as Jerusalem.

HARRIS: Well, what response do you have to what you've heard this evening? We've heard strong condemnations, not to be surprised to hear that coming from the Israelis that we've been speaking with, the Israeli authority figures. But we've also just gotten very strong words of condemnation coming from the White House as well.

RAHMAN: Well, we have no hesitation in condemning the violence and those acts of violence. And we condemn the killing of civilians, as we've said always -- Palestinian civilians as well as Israeli civilians. But having said this, we have also to condemn the conditions that lead people to desperation. What are those conditions? It is Israel's occupation that has lasted for 35 years that lead people to do desperate and despicable actions sometimes.

HARRIS: Well...

RAHMAN: Therefore, if we -- while we condemn those acts, we must, all of us, call on Israel to end its brutal occupation of the Palestinian people.

HARRIS: Why is it, sir -- can you tell us, why is it that despite everything that the Palestinian Authority says it is doing to crack down on those factions that may be executing these terror attacks, why is it then that everyone we've been talking with has been criticizing the Palestinian Authority is saying that you have not done enough?

RAHMAN: With all due respect, my friend, you know, the Israeli point of view is prevalent here in the United States and in the media. I listen to free Israeli speaks -- spokesman speaking, Mr. Avi Pazner, Mr. Gissin and Mr. Netanyahu. And I'm the second Palestinian, and I have to complain in order to be on television.

HARRIS: Well, sir, I must say it is not for lack of effort on our part. We had been working the phones diligently...

RAHMAN: Yes, I understand.

HARRIS: ... since this...

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RAHMAN: But what I am saying is -- what I'm saying is that we need also equal time in order to put our point of view forward. And I appreciate, fortunately, to be able to speak on American television, on CNN, and put our point of view like the Israelis do.

We -- listen, you have the Israeli television pictures shown on CNN. How many times did we see Palestinians being killed by the Israeli army shown on American television?

HARRIS: Well, sir, I'm sorry, we can't go back to whatever happened before, sir. We're here to talk about what happened this evening...

RAHMAN: Yes.

HARRIS: ... and specifically the comments that we're hearing from the administration. I must go back to ask you the question...

RAHMAN: Yes.

HARRIS: ... I started on with initially. Why is it, then, after everything you've said, that the Authority has been doing, that Yasser Arafat has been doing, why is it still that the U.S. is not satisfied that he has done enough?

RAHMAN: I honestly don't know why the administration is not satisfied. But what I'm trying to assure you and assure the audience that we are doing our utmost. But there are logistical and political problems -- logistical because Israel, for the last 14 months, has been attacking the very Palestinian security forces that were supposed to be engaged in saving those situations. In other words, what I'm trying to say that Israel systematically is attacking the police stations, attacking the police -- Palestinian police and killing them.

So logistically it is difficult for the Palestinians to carry on their mission. Adding to that, the Israeli army is encircling every single village and town, and creating a situation on the ground that is making it difficult for the Palestinian leadership to do more. What we are trying to tell the Israelis, we have no interest, whatsoever, in the continuation of this violence. But while the violence on the part of the Palestinians is conducted by a small group, a fringe group, the Islamic or Islamists, the violence on the Israeli side is conducted by the Israeli government, by the Israeli army.

So we need really to end this situation. We need from the Israeli army to stop its collective punishment of the Palestinians, allow the Palestinian police to move freely, and then both of us can move forward to calm this situation. But to continue attacking the Palestinian Authority and putting the blame on the Palestinian Authority is not going to help.

HARRIS: I'm sorry, representative Hassan Abdel Rahman, I'm sorry, but we are, unfortunately, going to have to move on.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

HARRIS: We are running out of time at this hour, but we do thank your patience.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

HARRIS: And we thank you for contributing this evening, and we hope to talk to you about this and other things in the future.

Right now, we want to, before we wrap up this hour, we'd like to get an update on the casualty figures. I understand there's some new information coming in now, and Avi Zohar is joining us now with that information.

Avi, what can you tell us?

AVI ZOHAR, ISRAELI MEDICAL RELIEF SERVICE: Yes, I can inform you that we have more than 150 casualties, about six, seven dead, and 50 seriously wounded. And the others, about 100 light and medium wounded. All of them were transported to a hospital in Jerusalem.

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We also gave them the blood that was necessary, about more than 500 units of blood was sent from our blood center in Tera Shemel (ph). And it was really one of the heaviest (UNINTELLIGIBLE) in the last months or even in the last year. At once so many casualties...

(CROSSTALK)

HARRIS: Mr. Zohar, I'm sorry to cut you off, but I want to just clarify one figure. You said six or seven dead. You can't be sure right now?

ZOHAR: Let's say six, and two -- the suicide -- two suicide also, well, they're bodies were there.

HARRIS: Yes, I understand.

ZOHAR: This is the situation in this moment.

HARRIS: I understand. Avi Zohar, thank you very much -- we appreciate your taking time to update us on that information.

And we'll continue to try to clear what we're getting in right now moment to moment, and we'll be back with more in just a moment, so please don't go away yet. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT [www.fdcch.com](http://www.fdcch.com)

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THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION TOPIC: PALESTINIAN POLICIES MODERATOR: MARTIN INDYK, THE  
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November 9, 2001, Friday

SECTION: PRESS CONFERENCE OR SPEECH

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HEADLINE: REMARKS BY NABIL SHAATH, MINISTER OF PLANNING AND INTERNATIONAL  
COOPERATION, AT THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

TOPIC: PALESTINIAN POLICIES

MODERATOR: MARTIN INDYK, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

LOCATION: THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

BODY:

MIN. SHAATH: Thank you very much, Martin, for a very affectionate introduction. I appreciate it.

And thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for inviting me here, for coming to attend this, and I hope to engage in a conversation, rather than just a monologue, about the present situation. It's a very tough one.

Of course, I'm coming from Gaza through several cities and several meetings -- in Brussels, with the 26 ministers of the Euro- Mediterranean Barcelona process of the European Union and its Arab and Mediterranean and Israeli partners; before that, from Damascus for a meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs of the Arab countries; and the last two days here in Washington -- met with Secretary Powell yesterday, and I'll be meeting in two hours or so with Dr. Rice.

So we are engaged very heavily in trying to find a way back to the peace process and eventually back to a permanent, lasting, fair, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

So we are still engaged, and we will continue to be engaged in that effort until we succeed. There is no alternative.

The wounds that have been generated, particularly over the last year, are deep, but we have been able to overcome deeper wounds when we started this peace process, not just in 1991, when we went all to Madrid, not just in 1993, when we signed the Oslo accords, but in intensive dialogue years preceding the Madrid and the Oslo official processes. Probably I was engaged in this dialogue since the late '60s and at times with Israelis who were threatened with prison sentence if they would meet somebody of the PLO.

We've overcome that. We were able to overcome the demonization and the illegal attempt at conversation, and we were able to put on the ground a peace process that went on quite successfully, actually, and approached very closely the permanent settlement that started in a summit in Camp David.

Of course, few months before Camp David, some preparations were made, but truly, Camp David was the first attempt at a permanent peace settlement. And I'd like to say here -- and I don't want to go into all

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the details and the nitty-gritty of what has happened and what has not happened in Camp David -- I would like to say that Camp David's importance was that, for the first time at a summit, we stopped looking at interim solutions and focused on a permanent solution. And that could have been, really, a very important contribution. However, it was laced with a lot of risks, risks that turned to be true at the end of the Camp David exercise.

When people engage for years in "interimness" -- in interim agreements -- they always have the comfort of feeling that whatever goes wrong in one stage of these interim negotiations will be fixed when we come to the next stage -- that finally, we will have an opportunity to review it all when we come to permanent status negotiations.

But when you are at it, at the stage where you have to decide, once and for all, the permanent requirements for the relationship between Israel and the Palestinian people and Palestine in peace -- in an agreement that should stick for as long as possible, possibly for good, then, I think, the risks become quite high to the two parties. Suddenly, the two parties realize that there are things they cannot leave on the table. Suddenly they realize, what does it take to really reach a final shape of their future (regime)? What does it mean to them, to their people? What does it mean to their relationship with their constituency? What does it mean to their relationship with the rest of the world?

And I think that is the risk of attempting to reach an agreement at the summit level of a permanent nature in two weeks. The two weeks were quite useful, but they revealed differences that the two parties had not seriously talked about before. They revealed that, actually, each of probably of the parties did not realize to what extent the other party was committed to some of the areas of that agreement that need to be accomplished before we do go into permanent peace. And I think, as a result, maybe each of the parties -- and I don't want to go into any blaming game -- maybe each of the parties felt that the other party could have accepted conditions that he didn't, and by not accepting them he had wasted a great opportunity that was never offered before.

We were never at it before. We were never at a table negotiating permanent status before.

I mean, it's just like somebody who has had a love story for some time, and then decided to get married, and then had to think about the children of each part from an earlier marriage and the accommodation that have to be made and the houses they have to live in and the arrangement they have to make and -- all of this in a microcosm. But if you go to arrangement that have to be made in peace between a people who were subjected to a long term of occupation and exile, the Palestinian people, and the Israelis, who had a long history of persecution and suffering as Jews in the Holocaust and their fears about security and so on -- you put these together and try to reach a settlement, a permanent settlement in two weeks with the president of the United States and the leaders of the two parties -- it was very difficult.

And I think it is important that you know what are really our requirements. Have we changed them? Were we really true when we talked about a permanent peace? Have we changed our mind about our recognition of the state of Israel and its borders and security? Was it really that we were offered the best effort that we had to reject, and why did we reject it? I'd like to be just very brief.

We want a fully sovereign and independent Palestinian state on the -- on that part of our national homeland which was occupied in 1967, i.e., the West Bank and Gaza, including East Jerusalem. We would like, in application of the resolution -- 242, and 338, and all the agreements we signed with the Israelis in an interim fashion -- to have Israel withdraw from every inch of that territory it occupied in 1967. We are willing still to swap some parts of that occupied territory -- small amount that is necessary for very important reasons for the two parties. And that swap has to be one-to-one -- namely, ending up with territory of the size of the 1967 occupied territory.

We would like to have -- we want to have our capital of that state in Jerusalem -- in East Jerusalem that was occupied in 1967. And we would have -- we want to have full sovereignty over our borders, our skies, our water, our sea, our people -- full sovereignty.

And we would like to see arrangements in Jerusalem that will make East Jerusalem our capital and West Jerusalem Israel's capital, one city with free movement and possibly municipal -- joint municipal

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activities. We would like to see free movement between the borders of that state and the Israeli state, and secure borders for each party, a secure border for safety and prosperity, but an open border for free movement of goods and services and for joint economic projects.

We would like to see a solution to the Palestinian refugee problem, a fair solution but a negotiated solution, not an imposed solution, negotiated within the confines of that agreement, based on Resolution 194. We would like to see security as between two partners, between two independent states and within a Middle Eastern context that is free and secure and living in harmony.

We would like to resolve all other questions amicably within the confines of that agreement, such as water shares and economic agreements and customs agreements and all of that. We haven't changed that. But we are not going to accept a quisling state; we're not to accept a semi-state; we're not going to accept a state without a capital, without borders under our sovereignty and without skies under our sovereignty, and without a real solution to the problems that we have faced during years of occupation. This is really it.

In Camp David, our negotiating parties did not think that they were ready to go into that. They thought that we could accept a state without borders and without control of the skies and without control of the underground water and without control of our territorial waters, and a state with a semi-capital that you need a JPS system to walk through to know which part of it you are in Palestine and which part of it you are in Israel and which part of it you are in a mixed sovereignty, in a mixed administration.

You -- we cannot accept a solution that ends all claims without really solving the problem of refugees. And by that, I don't mean the solution is 4 million refugees parachuting from the sky into Israel at one early-morning hour that will totally bring the situation back into chaos. A solution that's negotiated and that is fair and that can be applied and that will end in real peace between the two parties.

This is where we stood, and this is where we still stand. And if there is -- if we had to go into a confrontation for a full year, a painful one, very costly one for us, wiped 50 percent of our national income, made 60 percent of our people unemployed, killed more than a thousand people, more than half of them children, more than 30 percent of them children less than 12 years of age, destroyed a lot of our land, led to seeing the Israelis uproot most of our trees to have a full line of vision for their security, ending our first exploration of gas made by British gas in our territorial waters, stopping us from operating our airport, stopping us from building our harbor, stopping us from completing our power station, humiliating our people beyond belief, destroying the fabric of physical relations between our towns and cities and between part of our society in Gaza and the West Bank.

And yet we are still ready to go back to that negotiating table. We are still absolutely committed to make it work. And we are willing to look into all kinds of practical measures to make that possible, both on the political level and on the micromanagement of security problems.

But we feel that this year of confrontation added to years of agony for the Palestinians. While we were negotiating the peace process with the Israelis, the Israelis deepened their occupation through settlement activities, continued a policy of separating Gaza from the West Bank and putting closures on our economic activities and mobility of people and goods, continued to stop us from having our displaced Palestinians of 1967 returned to their homes, which was agreed to in Oslo, and made a lot of difficult structural matters that will take years to fix after the peace process is signed.

And yet we are willing and committed to going back to the peace process. We don't think it is possible alone, and we feel that the help we got from the United States in Madrid and after and the support we got from Norway that helped us put the Oslo agreement together, the continued support of Egypt in particular in continuing the negotiation between the DOP of Oslo and further agreements, is still there.

We need a third party. This has been absolutely necessary for Ireland and for South Africa and for the real difficult chronic problems in which issues of colonization and occupation are compounded with issues of ethnicity and religious strife and so on. You need a third party, and you need a third party on the ground.

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And I'm not talking about an expeditionary force. I am talking about monitors and observers on the ground who are acceptable to the two parties and who make sure to rebuild the trusts that have been destroyed over a year of confrontation and very, very difficult times, and political support that will bring the parties back into the negotiating process. Without that, the cycles of violence have continued and will continue.

We have all the instruments. The Mitchell recommendations, the Tenet understandings, the remainder of the Oslo interim agreements, the bases of 242 and 338 and the Madrid peace process are all there. I don't think there is a lack of clarity on what needs to be done. The question is, how do we make it done? How do we get it done?

And I think, in that regard, the role of the United States is absolutely vital. It's absolutely necessary, first of all, because the United States will do something that's good for the two parties. The United States ending the cycle of violence will be saving the Israelis as well as Palestinians, Middle Easterners, Arabs, in fact, contributing to peace and security for the rest of the world, because the United States is the only one capable of doing it in peace.

I mean, nobody is talking about a third party coming to fight the two parties but trying to influence them and persuade them to get back to the peace process. And nobody can do that other than the United States with its strategic relationship with Israel and with its existentialist relationship with Israel and with its very strong and important relationship with the Palestinian people, because the world will follow and support once the United States takes the lead, and because the alternative is horrible if the United States doesn't commit itself to take that lead.

And that really brings me, in conclusion, to the situation after the 9th of September. Obviously the world has changed since then. And I think the problem is that the Israelis think that the world has changed in ways that they can exploit, to simply dub us in our struggle as terroristic, so that we can be lumped with the bin Ladens of the day, and therefore Israel can get the support of the United States in ending the Palestinian quest for peace and independence and in joining with Israel in fighting the terrorist scourge, not only in Afghanistan but for the occupied and suffering Palestinian people. And this, I think, is the worst and most horrible, malicious opportunism and exploitation of the agonies of the American people.

When the 9th of September happened, the Palestinians agonized. And the Palestinians immediately took a decision to stand with the United States to condemn the terrorist horrible operations against the American people in New York and Washington and other places and to commit themselves publicly with the United States in its fight for a world that is more secure, more just, more prosperous, more peaceful for everybody.

And the Palestinian leadership did not only take that decision individually, but went to Doha, Qatar in the Arab consultative meeting of foreign ministers, and then in the foreign ministerial meeting of the Islamic organization, and worked very hard with the members of this organization to come with a clear Islamic statement in support of the United States and in full condemnation of terrorism and the crimes that were committed against the people of the United States.

So there is no doubt in my mind about where we stand in this matter. And I don't think there is any better response than for the United States not only to urge the parties but to work with the parties to produce an Israeli-Palestinian peace, because what is better than a peace between Christian and Muslim Palestinians and Jewish Israelis now as a response to bin Ladenism, as a response to all those who want to see a clash of civilizations?

What better response than to make peace that works, with the help of the United States? And how negative is the alternative of the United States seeming, looking like it is not using that opportunity to produce more justice. It's using that opportunity to produce more injustice and more difficulty in a very hot and delicate spot, and that is the Holy Land, Palestine and Israel.

I think opportunism in that matter is absolutely devastating. Palestinians are struggling for their independence. They're struggling for their freedom. They're struggling for a just peace between them and

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the Israelis. There are no international terrorists and they have absolutely never harbored any plans of going into war with the people of America or the people of any other country in that world.

We may agree or disagree about some of the tactics used, but look at the tactics used by the Israelis. One hundred fifty people have been assassinated by the Israelis in cold blood in the last year. People have been humiliated and utterly put in really terrorizing situations by the Israeli army and terrorists in the last year. And yet nobody wants to dub anybody as a terrorist at this stage.

We want to get back to peace. We want to get back to reconciliation. And nothing will be served by simply trying to look for yet new wars and new reasons for a continued conflict. We need new reasons for hope. We need new reasons for reconciliation. We need new mechanisms for getting together. And we need more reasons that we can resolve the issues without a clash of civilizations, without targeting Muslims or Jews or Christians anywhere in the world.

I'm coming with a message of peace and I am coming to ask for help from the United States in accomplishing it. And that is the reason I am here. And I have the hope it can be done. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

MR. INDYK: Thank you very much, Nabil. We're going to go to some questions now, if you will indulge us. Before I do, I apologize that I did not acknowledge and introduce Hassan Abdel Rahman, the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Washington. Welcome, Hassan.

Nabil, if you will allow me a two-part question. The first is that you well remember September 13th, 1993, when Yasser Arafat, on behalf of the Palestine Liberation Organization, forswore the use of violence and force in the settlement of Palestinian grievances in Israel. And there was a solemn commitment made, witnessed by the United States, and, in fact, the whole world.

Does that commitment still stand? Because we hear a lot from Palestinians who argue that you have the right to use violence to end the occupation, and it seems to me there is a conflict there between the commitments made by Chairman Arafat and the kind of things that we've seen in the last year. And so I wonder if you could address that in the context of going back to the negotiating table.

The second question is different. It relates to Osama bin Laden's claim that his actions, particularly the September 11th actions, were done on behalf of Palestine, that it was to liberate Palestine and that there won't be any respite from these attacks until Palestine is liberated. As a spokesman for the Palestinian people, I wondered if you could respond to that claim.

MIN. SHAATH: I'll address the second part first and then I'll go back to the first part. We were very clear -- I was personally very clear, and I made several statements in lots of places; so did President Arafat about this. We do not accept to be a pretext for bin Laden for anybody to kill innocent people in New York or anywhere else, for that matter. And I think that should be made very clear.

We have a just cause on its own, but we're not going to accept to become a pretext for anybody for other causes, not that Osama bin Laden has ever expressed any support for our cause before. He never did. He just discovered it a few weeks ago. I don't want to go more into his reasons and into his motivation. I mean, they are quite clear. But they are totally not accepted by our people and our leadership. And we said that very clearly, by the way, risking a lot of unpopularity in some circles. But I don't think popularity is what we were looking for.

On the first issue, of course, when you go into a peace process, the two parties forswear the use of violence. That is really the difference between a peace process and a confrontation. Now, in peace processes -- and by the way, when you come to the solution, not when you are too far away from it -- maybe this is my way of looking at a half glass full, that in South Africa and in Ireland, just before reaching a final solution, the most violent clashes and confrontations took place. It's because of this phenomenon I explained about reaching a permanent -- the risks and fears of signing a permanent peace.

But what do you do when there is a confrontation? What do you do, escalate it or de-escalate it and try to get it resolved as quickly as possible? In Ireland, the British actually did their best to de-escalate



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rather than to escalate. And when the IRA did not deliver its arms, the British did not renege on their part; continued to commit themselves to their part, but worked very hard to persuade the IRA to deliver its arms and to stop its fears of disarming before a full implementation of the agreement with the IRA has been made.

And look at what happened just a few days ago. It sounds unbelievable, but three Catholic Republican members of that assembly were asked by their party to join the Protestant Unionists in order to get the moderate Mr. Trimble elected among the Protestants, as the agreement stipulated, which would help bring back the peace.

In other words, it's like three Palestinians would be joining the Knesset to give more votes to a liberal Israeli pro-peace candidate to make it possible for the Israelis to go through the peace process. It sounds unbelievable, but we did a lot of that during the life of Mr. Rabin, the late prime minister of Israel. President Arafat and Mr. Rabin have done a lot of things to help each other during his reign as the partner in peace of President Arafat.

We are still committed to going back to that peace and to that non-violence, but it takes two to do that. And I don't really have to describe to you how horrible it has been. The Israelis really -- I mean, they use F-16 bombing. They use Apaches with wire-guided missiles to assassinate individuals in their homes.

And a lot of what really the Israelis call security measures have nothing to do with security. They have only to do with punishment and collective punishment and pressure. Add I questioned many of my Israeli friends about that. They would not say, "Well, everything is fair in war and love," I suppose. But, I mean, when you really say you are preventing the British from continuing their exploration of gas 20 miles west of Gaza in the Sea of Gaza, when absolutely not one Palestinian is engaged, where is the security angle?

When Israel stops giving us back \$ 400 million of taxes they collected for us because they are the only port that collects custom duties on our products, where is the security angle? When kids are forced to walk in mountain trails and dirt roads for hours to get to their school in the morning, where is the security angle? And therefore, I believe it's a question that the two parties have to do, Martin. And we are ready to do it.

MR. INDYK: We have questions, please. Could you take the microphone and identify yourselves? At the back there.

Q This is Jonathan Wright from Reuters. I wondered if you could just fill us in on the latest developments. Have you heard from President Arafat whether he is coming to New York? And how do you interpret the reluctance of the administration to set up a meeting with him when he is there?

MIN. SHAATH: President Arafat is coming. He is arriving tomorrow to New York, and he will be delivering a speech Sunday. And he will be meeting with all of those leaders who want to meet him in the United Nations General Assembly corridors and meeting rooms.

I cannot take a decision for the president of the United States. He has to decide how important it is to meet President Arafat. But his schedule, his calculations or whatever have to be made by him only. The president did not ask for a meeting, but obviously any meeting in the future will be helpful, I am sure, to the cause of peace.

MR. INDYK: Yes, please.

Q Warren Strobel (sp) with Knight-Ridder Newspapers. Sort of a follow-on question to that. You called for more American help. Where do you see the American position right now after meeting with Secretary Powell? And do you believe there's going to be in the coming weeks a more intensive American mediation effort?

MIN. SHAATH: I don't really see -- I don't understand fully the reasons for the reticence of the American administration to go as fast as possible into the role that it has enunciated really so clearly. The United States today is on record of supporting an independent Palestinian state as the outcome of the

REMARKS BY NABIL SHAATH, MINISTER OF PLANNING AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, AT THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION TOPIC: PALESTINIAN POLICIES MODERATOR: MARTIN INDYK, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION LOCATION: THE BROO

negotiations, and it therefore has clearly committed itself to a political solution, not a security solution, which is very important for the Palestinian people as the political light at the end of the tunnel.

The United States is in support of the Mitchell report and the Tenet proposal and the full implementations of these two agreements, which are very clear. Actually, Tenet is an American CIA director and Mitchell is an American. And the Mitchell report was actually officially issued by the White House, signed by George W. Bush, even though this exercise was commissioned by President Clinton.

And the United States is on record, and Mr. Bush and Mr. Powell yesterday confirmed that to me on record as favoring a monitoring and observation arrangement on the ground that will help the two parties accomplish. But, of course, the United States has not yet set a clear timetable for doing that. What calculations are in the mind of the decision-makers here, I don't know.

And I think any sober and rational calculation would reveal that this would not only be helpful to the Palestinians and Israelis. This will definitely be helpful in the total global quest for a more secure and a more just world, otherwise called the anti-terrorist coalition. But again, I mean, the United States is the world power and it has to make up its mind. And the sooner it makes it, I think, the better.

MR. INDYK: Nabil, maybe you will allow me, for the purposes of discussion, a follow-up on this precise point, because we've heard from a number of administration spokesmen -- the national security adviser yesterday, Deputy Assistant Secretary Satterfield on Friday -- that the administration's concern is that Yasser Arafat is not doing enough to fulfill his commitments, particularly when it comes to arresting people in planning and perpetration of terrorist acts.

And that seems to be, from an outsider looking at the statements that are coming out, seems to be the key requirement that the administration is posing before the United States is prepared to really roll up its sleeves and get engaged. So I wonder if you could respond to those statements.

MIN. SHAATH: I think that, again, shows the folly of the preconditional sequential approach, as opposed to the parallel and reciprocal approach. When you talk about a preconditioned approach, you go into the abyss. If the United States or, for that matter, the Israeli leadership or anybody wants the Palestinians under occupation to perform first the arrest and possibly killing of their own people who are fighting an invasion -- even if they do it in their own way with tactics that we don't approve, but basically they do it within the context of an Israeli invasion -- you say to them, "You have to demonstrate first your peacefulness and your willingness to go into this peace process, and then the invading party will have to start doing what is required of the other side."

This is exactly the opposite of the Mitchell report. Please go back and read the Mitchell report. The Mitchell report talks about the two parties simultaneously declaring a cease-fire, but then the two parties moving quickly into a mode of confidence-building that sustains each other's ability to continue the cease-fire.

And it very clearly spells out what Israel has to do immediately -- a full cessation of settlement activities, a quick end to the siege and closure and a quick end to the policies of assassinations and so on. And the Palestinians, therefore, simultaneously and reciprocally will have the responsibility of going ahead and disciplining their own people who violate that cease-fire.

MR. INDYK: I think we only have time for one more question. Please.

Q Hi, I'm Leah Odenek (sp) from AIPAC. My question is regarding the PA's stand on terrorism. You've said that it's very clear where the PA stands on terrorism. However, Chairman Arafat has been refusing to arrest some terrorists from Hamas and Islamic Jihad. And just last week, following the gunning down of a civilian bus, killing two civilians, including one American, your colleague, Ms. Ashrawi, has said that she views the actions of these groups as legitimate resistance. I'd like to know the PA position on these U.S.-designated terrorist groups.

MIN. SHAATH: I think there's a difference between our general acceptance of the right of -- and I think it's something that every international law and every country in the world accepts, at least for itself,



REMARKS BY NABIL SHAATH, MINISTER OF PLANNING AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, AT  
THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION TOPIC: PALESTINIAN POLICIES MODERATOR: MARTIN INDYK, THE  
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and that is the right of people to resist occupation and the right of people to fight an invasion, the right of people to protect their homes, and between some of the tactics of doing that. And the Palestinian Authority had always been very clear in condemnation of any of these tactics leading to the killing of civilians of both sides.

Very rarely do we see similar statements from the other side, especially when settlers -- and you know now there are two settler terrorist organizations who have been terrorizing Palestinians and assassinating people in passing cars and so on. I think we disagree. And we have made our position clear. There's a difference, again, here between having a principled position and being able to apprehend those people who violate your conditions for the legitimate struggle against an occupation.

You have to watch out really for the difference in ability between the Israeli government and the Palestinian government in that regard. The Palestinian government has a police force that has been totally destroyed as a viable organization by Israeli attacks in the last year.

All their headquarters have been destroyed, their vehicles, their communication equipment. Their ability to move policemen in trying to pursue people who violate our law are not able to move from one city to the other, let alone from the West Bank to Gaza. And they have been targeted, even as they move to arrest people at times. Our jails have been targeted and destroyed. In Nablus, the Israelis bombed the central Nablus prison with F-16s, very, very heavy bombing. Eleven prison wardens were killed in the process.

So we are asking a government to help and to cooperate at the time when the Israeli government is targeting that government and its very security forces. And also I again refer to the political conditions needed. Mr. Sharon has not really taken to court some people clearly accused by the Israeli military as having violated Israeli military code. Three Bedouin women were shelled by Israeli troops in Gaza and killed, and the Israeli army declared that it was a crime and that the officers who did it will be taken to court. Nothing of that happened.

In Datunya (ph), on the outskirts of Ramallah, Israelis actually -- Israeli forces -- special forces assassinated five Palestinian security men on a checkpoint. And the Israeli government declared that this was a mistaken identity; it was a mistake. And nothing was done to those who have done it. None of the settler organizations have been taken to court.

The question really -- and also, Mr. Sharon finds it absolutely impossible to declare a freeze on settlements. Why all of this? Because there's always a political rationalization for why the Israeli government cannot do something, because it finds it very difficult to do it, because it will lose support if it does it.

The Palestinians are not seen in that light at all, to be able to really go after Palestinians who are engaged in activities against the Israeli invasion. But this requires also some political support. And the only political support that the Palestinians are asking is for Israel to start doing on its own things that will reduce the onus of the siege and the burdens of the closure and the humiliation of the people and to start to end a little bit the suffocation of our economy so that our people can really be empowered by their government to go after those who disobey the rules of the government on engagement with Israeli occupation.

And that is precisely why we need a third party to implement an arrangement in which the two parties do what they have to do, because if the Israelis do what they have to do, they would be helping out President Arafat to strengthen his resolve in his own community and get more political support for it.

And if President Arafat does things that will help Mr. Sharon, it hopefully would strengthen his resolve in calling for the things that are required of his people. This is the logic of reciprocity. This is the logic of parallelism as opposed to the logic of preconditions that have not really worked and cannot possibly work in the future.

Thank you.

REMARKS BY NABIL SHAATH, MINISTER OF PLANNING AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, AT  
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MR. INDYK: Nabil, thank you very much for sharing your thoughts and analysis and perspective  
with us today. We appreciate it very much. Thank you for coming to Brookings.

MIN. SHAATH: Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

LOAD-DATE: November 10, 2001

Arab Envoys Contemplate Broad Realignment The Washington Post September 18, 2001 Tuesday Page

Arab Envoys Contemplate Broad Realignment The Washington Post September 18, 2001 Tuesday



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The Washington Post

September 18, 2001 Tuesday  
Final Edition

SECTION: A SECTION; DIPLOMATIC DISPATCHES NORA BOUSTANY; Pg. A14

LENGTH: 914 words

HEADLINE: Arab Envoys Contemplate Broad Realignment

BYLINE: Nora Boustany

BODY:

Although the most head-spinning buzz in the diplomatic community yesterday was about the Swiss cautiously exploring an apparent change of heart in Tehran on behalf of Washington on certain issues of terrorism, the swift across-the-board realignments taking shape are what have been most stunning in the week since terrorists struck the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Arab ambassadors interviewed Sunday and yesterday said their governments were unanimous in making the "hard yet unconditional choice" to throw their lot in with the United States, not just rhetorically, but also in practice -- notwithstanding regional issues further down the road.

In an interview yesterday, Pakistani Ambassador Maleeha Lodhi reiterated her government's support for Washington in its planned international campaign against those responsible for the Sept. 11 attacks, but she noted that there was a red line on the matter of involving Pakistani troops in operations outside the country's borders.

"Pakistan did not take its position because of a payback or a quid pro quo, but because of our opposition to terrorism," she said. "What Pakistan cannot do is have its forces participate in attacks outside its borders," Lodhi specified.

On the issue of possible overflights of Pakistan en route to Afghanistan, where chief terrorist suspect Osama bin Laden has been harbored by the country's Taliban rulers, she said, "We would be engaged in discussions about this kind of cooperation, because these are sensitive issues in open-ended plans that have yet to evolve."

There is considerable popular backing for the Taliban in Pakistan, whose military and intelligence services have extensively aided the government in Kabul.

Arab Envoys Contemplate Broad Realignment The Washington Post September 18, 2001 Tuesday

The prolonged presence in Washington of Gen. Mahmood Ahmed, director general of Pakistan's intelligence agency, who was in town for a previously scheduled visit at the time of last week's bombings, has made it much easier for Lodhi to get Washington's message across to her government. Economic and other sanctions imposed on Pakistan because of nuclear testing and the overthrow of a democratic government by the country's current ruler have "frayed" the U.S.-Pakistani relationship, and tended to make cooperation in the crucial area of combating terrorism "sporadic and fitful," Lodhi said.

The legal cover provided by the United Nations has helped Pakistan stand united with the international community, but the inclusion and lead of Islamic nations is also necessary, she said. "We need the visibility of Islamic nations in this coalition," she added, pointing to the need for a meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which groups more than 50 Muslim countries.

In contrast to the time of the Persian Gulf War, when hesitation and political hang-ups prevented decision-makers in Jordan, Yemen and the Palestinian leadership from joining the U.S.-led coalition against Iraq, there is a much deeper insight now into the need for "making hard choices," said Jordanian Ambassador Marwan Muasher, describing the resolve to forge ahead with support for the United States despite rumblings of discontent in some radical circles at home.

"There were situations where Arabs have looked the other way. They cannot do it anymore. Either they help or they are outcasts," Muasher said yesterday. The ambassador spoke at length during an Arab ambassadors' huddle Friday at the McLean residence of Saudi Ambassador Prince Bandar bin Sultan.

"Our answer is not in the military sphere," Muasher added. "I don't think the U.S. needs military support. It is going to involve covert cooperation on intelligence that does not involve the public. In some countries it has already been going on."

There has to be a foolproof mechanism, Muasher and others said, for putting an end to money laundering and stemming the easy flow of contributions from wealthy businessmen in the Persian Gulf region to nongovernmental organizations serving as fronts for radical groups.

"There are no reservations in the Arab world about the importance of this new era," said Palestine Liberation Organization representative Hassan Abdel Rahman, who also attended the Friday meeting. The pivotal meeting in McLean immediately followed a session between William J. Burns, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern Affairs, with all Arab envoys, one in a series of get-togethers last week.

"While we acknowledge the realities, we have to get a feeling for where we fit in this international alliance, Abdel Rahman said, noting that Palestinian participation will make it "easier" for other Arab countries to take part despite the strong passions about the plight of Palestinians in the vein of the Arab body politic.

In an interview Sunday, Egyptian Ambassador Nabil Fahmy said Egypt was going "to help openly."

However, he said, Egypt had been asking to deal with this issue for years and was rebuffed by the United States, Britain and others when Cairo demanded the extradition of major terrorist figures such as Omar Abdel Rahman and Egypt's Islamic Jihad chief, Ayman Zawahiri. Rahman was involved in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and was convicted in 1995. Zawahiri is now known to be among bin Laden's close associates.

"Everybody is being asked to give up something, even the United States," Fahmy said. "Carefree travel as we have known it has to be given up."

"We have to be able to tell our people this is against terrorism and not against Arabs and Islam," he said.

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Conference Set On Nationalist Groups Albuquerque Journal (New Mexico) September 14, 2001 Friday



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September 14, 2001 Friday

SECTION: Pg. B2

LENGTH: 146 words

HEADLINE: Conference Set On Nationalist Groups

BYLINE: Journal Staff Reports

BODY:

AROUND ABQ

IN BRIEF

The efforts of nationalist movements around the world will be the subject of a conference Saturday, hosted by a University of New Mexico organization.

The conference is scheduled at 10 a.m. Saturday at UNM's Continuing Education Center auditorium, 1634 University NE.

The conference, called Nationalism and Imperialism in the 21st Century, will feature a panel discussion with representatives of four nationalist movements.

The panel members are: Hassan Abdel Rahman, the Palestinian Liberation Organization's U.S. ambassador; Niall O'Dowd, publisher and editor of The Irish Voice of New York; Daniel Turp, an observer of the Quebecois independence movement in Canada; and Charles Truxillo, a UNM professor of Chicano Studies.

The conference is hosted by Estudiantes Contemporaneos del Norte, a Hispanic student organization at UNM.

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Peres to Meet Arafat Next Week Associated Press Online September 6, 2001 Thursday



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September 6, 2001 Thursday

SECTION: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 505 words

HEADLINE: Peres to Meet Arafat Next Week

BYLINE: ALESSANDRA RIZZO; Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: CERNOBBIO, Italy

BODY:

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Thursday night that he will meet with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat next week, part of his drive to end nearly a year of deadly fighting between Israelis and Palestinians.

In the Mideast, Palestinian International Cooperation Minister Nabil Shaath said efforts were under way to arrange the talks. "Until this moment, no time and no date and no place for such a meeting has been set."

Peres made the announcement as he arrived in Cernobbio, a lakeside retreat in northern Italy.

Asked by reporters when he would meet with Arafat, Peres replied: "It will be next week. Probably we'll have three different meetings, one after the other."

Peres did not specify which date or just where he would begin his meeting with Arafat, saying only that it would take place in "the region," meaning the Middle East.

Peres said he had met with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon earlier in the day and that Sharon supported his efforts, going on now for two weeks now, to hold talks with Arafat.

"We want to have a serious meeting" with Arafat, he said.

Earlier on Thursday, Israeli helicopters fired missiles on a vehicle carrying Palestinian militants, killing two and slightly injuring a defiant militia leader. In a revenge attack, Palestinian gunmen shot and killed one Israeli soldier and wounded another a few miles away from the helicopter attack.

The violence was the latest in an more than 11 months of fighting that has gripped the West Bank and Gaza strip, claiming more than 750 lives. A visit on Sept. 28, 2000, by Sharon, then a hard-line opposition leader, to a disputed Jerusalem holy site, sparked riots by Palestinians that escalated into months of uprising.

"It's an extremely difficult situation," Peres said of the violence. "The two peoples are really angry. But you make peace between enemies and you make cease-fire out of fire."

Peres to Meet Arafat Next Week Associated Press Online September 6, 2001 Thursday

The Israeli then went into a villa, with sharpshooters on the roof and police deployed in the garden surrounding it on Lake Como for his meeting with Italian Foreign Minister Renato Ruggiero.

After the meeting, Ruggiero told reporters the Peres-Arafat meeting would be "a first step. It's not peace, but it's a first step." Peres didn't speak again with reporters.

Hassan Abdel Rahman, the Palestinian Liberation Organization's chief representative in the United States, also said that the talks hadn't been finalized. "There has to be proper preparation" for such a meeting, he told The Associated Press in Washington. "It has to bring results."

A senior Palestinian official said prior to Peres' announcement that a meeting would be held Sunday either in Taba, Egypt or at the Erez crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip.

Peres came to northern Italy to attend an annual seminar in Cernobbio, about an hour's drive from Milan, involving politicians, economists and other noted figures.

Arafat was also invited to the three-day Cernobbio seminar, but organizers said they hadn't heard if he would come.

LOAD-DATE: September 7, 2001









Israel Distrusts Arafat; Truce Still Distant CNN June 7, 2001 Thursday



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CNN

SHOW: CNN LIVE TODAY 12:00

June 7, 2001 Thursday

Transcript # 060704CN.V75

SECTION: News; International

LENGTH: 1514 words

HEADLINE: Israel Distrusts Arafat; Truce Still Distant

GUESTS: Benjamin Netanyahu

BYLINE: Lou Waters, Natalie Allen

HIGHLIGHT:

Ariel Sharon declared at least a limited truce more than two weeks ago, and Yasser Arafat made a similar pledge after last week's suicide bombing at a Tel Aviv disco. That attack killed 21 people. Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaks of the current conflict between the two sides. Hassan Abdel Rahman, the Palestinian representative to the United States, also offers his insight.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

LOU WATERS, CNN ANCHOR: Ariel Sharon declared at least a limited truce more than two weeks ago, and Yasser Arafat made a similar pledge after last week's suicide bombing at a Tel Aviv disco. That attack killed 21 people.

We're joined now by a man with more than a passing interest in the Israeli-Palestinian situation, former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Welcome, sir.

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU, FMR. ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER: Good to be with you.

WATERS: First of all, where are we? The unilateral cease-fire declared by Sharon on May 22, followed by the bombing at the nightclub, followed by Arafat saying we will suspend hostilities. Does that fulfill the Mitchell Report's intention of getting this back on track?

Israel Distrusts Arafat; Truce Still Distant CNN June 7, 2001 Thursday

NETANYAHU: Not really, because Arafat is still dribbling a lot of skirmishes, a lot of attacks. But one thing has been demonstrated; he has reined in the more aggressive bombings by the groups like Islamic of Jihad and Hamas, which shows, first of all, that he controls them.

I think the most important thing to understand is, this is not a symmetrical tribal violence. Both sides are doing it; they are not. One side is doing the attacking, Arafat, using the kind of terrorist warfare, the form of terrorist war of attrition against Israel. One side is doing the defending: Israel.

I think that what is required is that Yasser Arafat cease completely all violence and he can. But not for a week or two. Permanently, permanently abandon violence precisely as he promised to do at the start of the Oslo peace process, and he's never lived up to it.

WATERS: In the Israeli Jerusalem daily, there is a report indicating that Arafat, Palestinian authority will not arrest these Hamas, Islamic Jihad militants that Israel's demanding be arrested. How do you get to the confidence-building phase of the Mitchell Report?

NETANYAHU: Well, you are not going to get very far. Because, if he doesn't arrest these killers, they will do it. Probably with his encouragement, but sooner or later, they will do it.

The first obligation of good neighborly relations is to prevent the use of your territory as a staging ground for attacks on the neighbor's territory. That's a responsibility that governments have and regimes have. And Yasser Arafat has thrown that into the wind. He is conducting this kind of attack, and he's not conducting it for a resolvable grievance.

He was offered in Camp David all of the things that he says in the West that he wants. West Bank state, half of Jerusalem as his capital, all of these were unbelievably, in my opinion, scandalously offered by a previous Israeli government. He turned it down. Because what he wants is Tel Aviv. What he wants is all of Israel.

It's not an issue that we can resolve, so we have here a problem of an illegitimate goal pursued with illegitimate means, terror, and I think that that has to stop.

WATERS: Main sticking, or one of the main sticking points with Palestinians are the settlements. There's a report that there is a settlement freeze on. Is there or is there not?

NETANYAHU: I don't know, because I have not been to Israel for the last couple of days.

WATERS: Would you encourage or support it?

NETANYAHU: I would encourage that issue to be discussed in the final status peace negotiations, once we have seen that Arafat has permanently abandoned the violence.

WATERS: So, you don't see that as part of the confidence building.

NETANYAHU: I don't think it really is the issue. You know, the Barak government less than a year ago offered Arafat not a freeze on settlements, they offered the uprooting of settlements, and Arafat said, I'm not interested in that. I don't want the peace with the state next to Israel; I want a peace, instead of Israel. And that remains the root cause of the conflict.

The root cause of the conflict is the persistent refusal by Arafat and others in the Palestinian community, to accept Israel in any boundary, and it's when they get a leadership that says, you know, Israel is here to stay. When they say that in Arabic to their own people, Israel is here to stay, we'll have to argue where the border will be; we'll have to argue about settlements; we'll have to argue about land.

But Israel, about Israel's right to exist, we will not argue and we will no longer attack and bomb them. We will try to live with peace with them. I yearn for the day -- I pray for the day when a new and genuine Palestinian leadership approach comes to being, not only for us, but for the sake of our Palestinian leadership.

WATERS: Thank you, sir. Benjamin Netanyahu.

NETANYAHU: Thank you.

Israel Distrusts Arafat; Truce Still Distant CNN June 7, 2001 Thursday

WATERS: We're going to get another view of this now -- Natalie?

NATALIE ALLEN, CNN ANCHOR: Well, Palestinians definitely have their own perspective on all of this, and joining us from Washington with that is Hassan Abdel Rahman, the Palestinian representative to the United States.

We thank you for joining us today.

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REP. TO U.S.: Thank you for having me.

ALLEN: Well, we just heard from Mr. Netanyahu that Mr. Arafat has reigned in his extremists, which, Mr. Netanyahu says, does mean he has control of the extremists, which Israel has said all along, which the Palestinians have not agreed. And he also says, though, that Arafat needs to abandon all violence.

What's your response to his comment?

RAHMAN: Well, first of all, Mr. Netanyahu is telling the truth upside-down by saying that the Palestinians want Tel Aviv instead of the West Bank. He forgets that it is the Israeli Army that's occupying the West Bank in Gaza. It is the settlers, the Israeli Jewish settlers, who are engaged in acts of vigilantism against the Palestinian population and that the Palestinian people are defending Ramallah and Nablus. And when some Palestinian does anything in Tel Aviv, we all condemn him, and we all express our outrage at him.

But when Israeli troops kill 500 Palestinians in their own cities when they use the F-16 and the tanks and the helicopters to attack Palestinian civilians, nobody -- Mr. Netanyahu is not outraged, and he thinks that that's self-defense.

ALLEN: And he says that the root cause, however, is that the Palestinians will not accept Israel's identity and Israel's borders. With the perspective that you just gave and the perspective that he gave, where do you move on from there? How do you move on from there? Is there anything that George Tenet can do from the United States as he visits in the Middle East?

RAHMAN: Let me reaffirm what we have done thousands of times: that we accept Israel within the 1967 boundaries, and we expect Israel, in exchange, to accept our right to live on our West Bank and Gaza, which constitutes only into 22 percent of our historic homeland. But no Jewish settlements, no Israeli Army, no Israeli tanks.

Look at what's happening today. Israel is imposing a collective punishment on 3 million Palestinians who live prisoners in their own homes, depriving them of the right to move, to go to work, to go to school, to go to hospitals. To do -- to work. So, listen...

ALLEN: And that's been because of the violence. However...

RAHMAN: Well, you know, but the violence is the occupation itself. I mean, when you have a foreign army in your own country, what do you do? Isn't the Israeli Army occupying Palestinian territory? Isn't the Jewish settlers taking away Palestinian land that belongs to Palestinian peasants? Don't you see that they have uprooted the 25,000 olive trees in the Palestinian territories and destroyed 800 homes and killed 500 Palestinians and wounded 15,000? Isn't this violence?

Now, let me turn to the question of: we want the cease-fire to hold. We want to be able to live free in our country. And we want Israel to have security, and we hope that this is not a public relation issue.

ALLEN: What do you think will come out of the meeting with George Tenet from the United States?

RAHMAN: I hope -- I hope that we will (UNINTELLIGIBLE) the cease-fire, and that this will be a preparation to move very soon to the negotiating table to discuss the issues. In Camp David, we were offered nothing that satisfies the international community. If that was true, that Camp David -- in Camp David we were offered something that we should not reject, why, then, President Clinton offered something much more than what was offered in Camp David, by acknowledging what was offered in

Israel Distrusts Arafat; Truce Still Distant CNN June 7, 2001 Thursday

Camp David was inadequate? Let's not engage in propaganda here. You have lives of Palestinians and Israelis at stake.

ALLEN: We thank you.

RAHMAN: Mr. Netanyahu is negotiating with Mr. Sharon on television.

ALLEN: All right. We thank you so much for your comments as well. Hassan Abdel Rahman from Washington.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

ALLEN: Thanks. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT [www.fdch.com](http://www.fdch.com)

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FORUM OF THE CENTER FOR POLICY ANALYSIS ON PALESTINE PARTICIPANTS: HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY; NABIL FAHMY, EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S.; AND MARWAN MUASHER, JO



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May 29, 2001, Tuesday

SECTION: STATE DEPARTMENT BRIEFING

LENGTH: 7971 words

HEADLINE: FORUM OF THE CENTER FOR POLICY ANALYSIS ON PALESTINE

PARTICIPANTS: HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY; NABIL FAHMY, EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S.; AND MARWAN MUASHER, JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S.

MODERATOR: SAMIH FARSOON

LOCATION: CENTER FOR POLICY ANALYSIS ON PALESTINE, WASHINGTON, D.C.

BODY:

MR. FARSOON: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine. My name is Samih Farsoun, and I am on the board of the Jerusalem Fund and the Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine.

It is my privilege this morning to introduce to you our distinguished speakers. We are very privileged to have them at this important juncture in the political and diplomatic history of the Middle East.

I'd like to introduce them in the order that they will speak I believe. And they are distinguished and have very long CVs, but I am not going to spend all the time. I'll take most of their time away from their talks if I read all of their CVs.

We have until 2:00 exactly today, and you have on your seats cards that we wish you would write questions for them. Each will speak in turn for about 10 to 12 minutes, and then we will have a chance for questions and answers from them after that.

It is my pleasure to introduce first Dr. Marwan Jamal Muasher, ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the United States and Mexico. Dr. Muasher presented his credentials as ambassador to Jordan on December 8th, 1997. Prior to his posting in Washington, Ambassador Muasher had served as minister of information. He was stationed in Israel as Jordan's envoy from 1995 to 1996. During the Middle East peace talks, from 1991 to 1994, Dr. Muasher directed the Jordan Information Bureau in the United States. Just prior to this position he was press advisor to the prime minister of Jordan. Ambassador Muasher attended the American University of Beirut from 1972 through '75. He received a B.S. in electrical engineering, an M.S. in computer engineering, and a Ph.D. in computer engineering from Purdue University.

Next we will have Mr. Nabil Fahmy. Mr. Fahmy is a career diplomat in the Egyptian Foreign Service. He has been ambassador of Egypt to the United States since 1999. Before that he was the ambassador of

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Egypt to Japan. And he has served in many, many capacities, including as first secretary of the Egyptian mission to the United Nations in New York. He is well published and has a number of publications on arms control and disarmament issues. He has studied at the American University of Cairo, both in management and physics and mathematics as well.

And the last one to be introduced -- it is my privilege to introduce Mr. Hassan Abdel Rahman. Mr. Abdel Rahman has been the head of the Palestine mission in the United States since 1994. He is both chief of mission for both the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian National Authority. From '92 to '93 Mr. Abdel Rahman served as chief of the Palestinian mission in Canada. Mr. Abdel Rahman serves also as senior political advisor to the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid peace conference, and to the peace talks in Washington, D.C. From 1988 to 1992, he was director of the Palestine Affairs Center in Washington. He has many other positions that he held. He obtained a master's degree in public administration from the University of Puerto Rico, as well as degree in political science from Catholic University of Puerto Rico. He speaks Arabic, English, Spanish and Portuguese. Maybe he will talk to us in Portuguese today. (Laughter.)

It is indeed my great pleasure to introduce these gentlemen to you, and to have them speak in the order I introduced them. Thank you. (Applause.) B. MUASHER: Thank you, Dr. Farsoun. I am going to limit my talk to the contents of the Jordanian-Egyptian initiative and just offer a few thoughts as my other colleagues will address other parts of the political development taking place now.

As you know, the Jordanian or the Egyptian-Jordanian initiative really came out as an attempt by the region to play an active role in stopping the crisis which we are facing right now in resuming the political process on the Palestinian-Israeli issue. This initiative does not offer any particular source as to the content of negotiations. These are left to the two sides to negotiate among themselves. But it does offer a road map that hopefully would take us out of the present crisis and resume the political process at an early date in the future.

The initiative -- and as you know although there were informal publications of its contents -- and yet we really chose not to dwell so much on every word in the initiative, as this is not the most important part of it. What is important is the content that it offers to the region and to the two sides. And if the concept is accepted we believe it offers a very reasonable way out of the present crisis.

It basically has three steps. The first are steps to end the present crisis, and these call for implementation of signed agreements, particularly of Sharm el Shiek and to the confrontation that exists today, and an end to also the military and the economic siege that Israel has today, and a return to Israel's position prior to December 2000 when the present intifada broke out. It also calls for convening or reconvening the Security Council meetings that took place before the second intifada broke out as well.

Then it is followed by a second step, which we also call confidence-building measures. These steps involve implementing all of the articles of the first Sharm el Shiek agreement signed December 5, 1999, including of course a third failed withdrawal by Israeli forces. And most importantly it also freezes all settlement activities.

And if you look at these two components, they mirror to a great extent that of the Mitchell report. The Mitchell report and the Egyptian-Jordanian initiative are really very close in the first two steps that they call for in order to take us out of the present crisis. But the Egyptian-Jordanian initiative goes one step further, and it is in our opinion a very important step, and one without which there is little hope of resuming or of getting out of the crisis, which is it offers a political component that will allow for a resumption of the negotiating process. We strongly believe that without offering such a political component that stopping at the Mitchell report is not by itself going to be able to get us out of where we are at today.

And therefore the initiative calls for a third phase, which is a resumption of the negotiating process that is one based on U.N. Resolution 242 and 348; and, two, it also calls for the need to preserve progress made in previous negotiations. That is why it does not explicitly call for abiding by all such negotiations. One cannot also ignore the fact that even though the progress made at Sabah did not end in signing an

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agreement; one cannot ignore the fact that indeed a lot of progress has been made that needs to be taken into account in any serious future negotiation.

This is the road map that is being offered by the initiative. It is simple, it is reasonable, it is based on signed agreements between the two sides. There is nothing new in this initiative except that it outlines in a sequence needed steps to be able to resume the process.

But one issue that has come up does of course we believe has emerged as the most important issue in this present crisis, is the issue of settlement activity. This is very important -- not just for Palestinians, but for Jordan, for all Arabs, the settlement activity stop in full. This is not, as Israel states, something that is being put on the same path with ending violence. It has nothing to do with ending violence. Settlement activity is illegal under international law -- has been condemned by all the countries or most of the countries of the world. The United States itself, while its position has weakened over settlement activity, still believes that settlement activity is an obstacle to peace. And unless we can agree on a freeze in such settlement activity there is little hope that you can give the Palestinians that there is light at the end of the tunnel. And really final status negotiations are not conducted in an atmosphere where facts on the ground are working to their disadvantage. Even the Oslo agreements, as you all know, state that unilateral action cannot be undertaken while final status negotiations are taking place. And settlement activities, as far as we are concerned, are indeed a unilateral action that should be stopped.

Israel keeps referring to the need to expand based on natural growth. There is no new settlements in Israel's terminology, but allowing for expanding the existing settlements to accommodate natural growth. Frankly our experience in the past has not been very positive with this Israeli position. That is known to all of you. Since the Oslo process started in 1993, there has been a 70 percent expansion in settlement activity in the last eight years, which goes of course well beyond any reasonable definition of natural growth.

This is what is on the table right now. This initiative has been accepted by Russia, by the European Union, by really many countries around the globe, and we are very encouraged by this. It is also supported by the United States. While the United States has not taken as strong a public position on the initiative as other countries have, yet we are working with the United States, and with all parties concerned in order to really, as I said, offer something for the future that goes beyond stopping the crisis that we are in now.

And I want to stop at this point and let my colleagues also talk about other aspects, and then listen to your questions and comments. Thank you. (Applause.)

AMB. FAHMY: I am going to build on what Ambassador Muasher said, and therefore simply give some off-the-cuff remarks without getting into once again the Jordanian-Egyptian proposal which he has explained I think quite clearly and quite eloquently.

In essence, we were asked to come here and talk about where we are today -- the U.S. role -- and where do we go from here. And let me in a bit of a philosophical trend try to comment on where we are today in terms of the Arab perspective on the one hand, but if I could add to that an Arab reading of the Israeli perspective as well.

Without getting into how it started, because that's a -- it's an issue which is -- could take most of the debate here, although frankly I think it was an issue that is clear-cut to any objective analyst. If I read the mood in the Arab world today, particularly in the Palestinian sector -- although I'll leave Hassan to comment more precisely on that -- it's different from what I hear abroad about it. I hear questions about the intentions of Palestinians, their commitment to peace, and that of the Arab world. And I'd like to say that my reading, Egypt's reading of the mood in the Arab world, is simply -- it's not -- it's of course not a good mood, but it is a mood which is best defined by saying that the center of the Arab world wants peace but has doubts about the possibility of peace in the present environment because of the developments which we've seen especially since the intifada and the measures that have come after that. And it's a mood which makes it very difficult to try to continue to find modalities to push the process forward. But at the same time it's a mood which I think was the driving force behind the Egyptian-Jordanian proposal. We did

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not make it out of a naive sense of idealism, but we made it out of a commitment to peace, even when the time is difficult -- even when the going is not what you'd want it to be.

If I can add, I think the mood in Israel -- and I say this talking about the Center -- and I was also talking about the Center in the Arab world -- I think it's -- again, it is not a mood which is against peace, but I think you have to change the face of it rather than want and doubt. I think it's more doubt and want. In other words, there are more people -- in my reading of the Israeli center -- who doubt the possibility of peace and are focusing on that part of the phrase than those who are focusing on the idea of wanting peace. And because of that you find more and more the -- if you want the more vocal peace camp not becoming vocal and retrenching back into the background, which I think is a difficult and regrettable posture, because it is time -- it is at times like this when we all have to take further action, when we all have to really strive and carry the burden when policies are being pursued, which are frankly inconsistent with peace.

I make these points as sort of a context for a long explanation of the proposal -- and I think it's important because it provides a context for everything that's happened since then, and in many respects for how I can at least speak on the Arab side -- how the Arab side will act in the future.

Our commitment to peace is still unwavering. Our confidence in achievement is what's wavering. But we will continue to work towards that objective, and we hope we will find a partner -- not to pursue and develop a different peace, but to pursue and develop the historic compromise which was achieved all the way back in Resolution 242 and then developed after that with the compendium of different resolutions and processes and agreements which we developed on other tracks -- Palestinian, of course Jordanian, Lebanese and Syrian as well.

Let me comment for just a few seconds on the U.S. role. And it's really an interesting question, because on the one hand we are all asking for a larger U.S. role, and on the other hand, if you put yourself in the shoes of an American politician, he looks at it from the American perspective. And therefore as is obvious up to now, are engaged but more costly engaged than the call you've heard from the region.

This is a new administration, and it's normal and quite expected for them to be cautious. That is an element which we don't challenge, which we don't disagree with. On the other hand, from our perspective, from the Middle East, it is an extremely urgent, volatile situation which will move from bad to worse. And therefore we argue for an enhanced engagement by the U.S. -- not only from the perspective of our own interests as countries looking for a peace process trying to move this process forward, but also from the perspective of -- that the situation will get worse and therefore it will be more difficult even for the U.S. in the future if you have a more volatile situation and if you have less optimism, less possibility for peace.

But what is the role that we are all looking for? And I will be a bit candid. And I don't want to use this traditional phrase of honest broker. I am really looking at the role as the main sponsor of the Middle East peace process. That's the commitment that the U.S. took upon itself. The U.S. took upon itself the commitment that the basis for the resolution of this problem will be the Madrid framework, which is based on 242 and international law. That is the commitment. That is what we are asking the U.S. to continue to pursue. And the U.S. has been, whether the tactics were right or wrong, the U.S. has been part and parcel of almost all of the agreements that have been reached over the last eight, nine years. Therefore it is a U.S. responsibility to build -- to preserve first of all on the commitments that were taken all the way back at Madrid; secondly, to preserve what we built over the last eight, nine years.

And then you have a commitment -- you have a responsibility as the main sponsor within the Madrid peace process to pursue agreements on the Palestinian-Israeli track and consequently or in parallel to that with Lebanon and Israel as well. So it is not -- and I want to underline this -- it's not that you have to respond the way Arabs want you to respond. It is you have the responsibility to respond on the basis of your own commitments and defending your own interests in the region. And therefore it is imperative not to allow the parties in the region to cross red lines and boundaries where they violate the essence and the

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foundation of the principals governing the peace process -- acquisition of territory by force, violating the basic parameters of 242 and the agreements reached are just simple examples of that.

The third point I'd really like to make -- and then maybe then give the floor to Ambassador Rahman to comment on the Palestinian perspective -- is where do we go from here? Or my perception of what will happen. I don't know what's going to happen -- except for one thing -- we will not stay where we are. That's not going to happen. We either will fly backwards or slowly try to be able to manage the situation as it is today, and ultimately down the road infuse new optimism, new hope in the peace process and be able to build on that.

The choice is -- well, it's not a --well, it is a moral choice on the one hand. But, beyond that, you cannot prevent yourself from moving backwards, unless you address the concerns of all the parties. And if I can't say we are not appearing to be promoting our own proposal too much, I think that is the essence of the Jordanian- Egyptian proposal. It deals with the concepts and elements that have been raised by all the parties, Arabs and Israelis. It is not a proposal which is simply defining processes of one side rather than the other. It has -- it emphasizes fundamentals, it has -- it fails -- and at the same time it has a clear time line and road map for where we are going. In other words, we are not redefining the wheel here, we are not developing a new peace process; we are building on what we have achieved.

In the absence of that things ultimately will get much worse. When in the past we were looking at -- I don't want to appear to be cynical here, but when we were looking at state-to-state conflict it was bad enough. When you are looking at the situation where individuals are killed every day on simple errands from one place to the other, you are really looking at a conflict which is much deeper and much more dangerous. It is imperative, despite of the deep sense of pessimism, which frankly I can't say that I don't share at least partially -- it is imperative to once again in this particular difficult time to prevent ourselves from moving backwards by being engaged, by being active, by having a larger U.S. role, by activating the peace movements wherever they may be, financing these policies, which is consistent with enunciating and practicing a policy which is consistent with the Madrid fundamentals, and the agreements reached so far between the parties.

I just want to make one point which is particularly frustrating in the negotiating process. The whole debate about whether we can -- whether agreements were binding for the parties or not if they have not been signed, with understandings by the parties, where we move from where we are today -- if you look at the Mitchell report, it talks about agreements and understandings. If you look at the Mitchell report, it talks about the positions of all the parties, particularly the Palestinians -- in this case the Palestinians and the Israelis. If you look at the Egyptian-Jordanian proposal, again it has all the elements there -- nobody is de-emphasizing the importance of one rather than the other. Nobody is getting into the debate about what -- at least the proponents of the report and the proposals -- on what has to be done first. There is both a principled legal position presented there and pragmatic realism into what can be done provided that they are taken as a package rather than simply picking and choosing one point in the proposal or the other. And that I think is the concept with which we have to pursue the peace process in the future. If we decide to pick and choose out of the Mitchell report or the Jordanian-Egyptian proposal, neither will get anywhere. If we take them as a package and see how we can pursue the elements in response to the position of the other side, then you may have a chance to stop the situation where it is today, to slowly try to build confidence, and to move quickly -- to move into the negotiating process.

I put them in that way, and I want to emphasize the three elements of dealing with the situation today -- building confidence and moving the negotiation on final settlement cannot be separate. I don't believe that if you separate them any of them are achieved. I don't believe that you can address the current crisis. And you will notice in the Jordan-Egypt proposal that is how the first phase is described. It is not described as violence or the lack of violence; it is dealing with the present crisis.

The next phase, which talks about confidence building again -- talks about issues in which deal with the positions of both sides. And final settlement. It's needless to say it would be tremendously difficult to come to closure on final settlement in this environment. But I think by deciding not to deal with issues of final settlement, by politically taking the decision to postpone them, we ultimately may be doing much



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more damage to the first two phases of the proposals where they are confidence-building or dealing with the present crisis.

I've already gone on longer than I've wanted, and I wanted to give Hassan his time to speak. But I am happy to take questions after that. Thank you. (Applause.)

MR. RAHMAN: Well, let me at the outset thank the Center for Policy Analysis and also Samih Farsoun and Heidi for inviting us here today, and all of you for coming.

I will focus in my short presentation on the Mitchell report -- for two reasons. One because it really corrects many of the distortions and misperceptions that were perpetrated by the government of Israel and the supporters of Israel here in the United States about the origins of the intifada and what has happened since then. And, second, because the Mitchell report now is the foundation on which the latest diplomatic efforts to get us out of the situation are being focused.

So on the issue of the substance of the report, we, the Palestine Liberation Organization and Palestinian National Authority, consider the report to be a balanced statement, and we endorse its foundations, and we believe that its implementation will complement the Jordanian- Egyptian peace initiative.

We consider it balanced because it really deals with the positions of both parties; this is not one-sided. Although when we spoke to Senator Mitchell, I personally, after he issued the report, he said he was not writing -- his intention was not to write a history book. His intention was to write a political statement or political report to serve as the basis for efforts to get us out of the situation we are in.

So but nevertheless the report made very interesting findings. Among them is that the responsibility for the intifada lies on Israel, first for the Al Axa (ph) Mosque visit of Mr. Sharon on September 28 to el Harisharif (ph) and second to the level of violence used by the Israeli army in the first four days of the intifada where over 49 Palestinians were killed before any Israeli was wounded. So it was really the violence by the Israeli army that created the situation among the Palestinians which led to the situation we are in today, and to the level of protect and resistance that the Palestinians are conducting to the Israeli military occupation.

So the first four days of the intifada, which were civil disobedience by the Palestinians -- 49 Palestinians were killed, no Israelis were wounded. And those who were involved in the killing of the Palestinians was the Israeli army and the Israeli security forces. Therefore the report clearly indicates the responsibility clearly lies on the Israelis.

The second finding of the report is that there is no evidence that supports the allegation of the Israeli government and the supporters of Israel that this intifada was pre-planned by the Palestinian Authority as a response to Israeli offers -- so-called generous offers at Camp David, from which the Palestinians walked away. On the contrary, the report says clearly that all their investigations during the four months did not reach that conclusion.

The third finding is that the settlement activity in the Palestinian territories are the most serious -- (inaudible) -- act by the Israeli government. It undermines the confidence of the Palestinians in the process, and it undermines the whole possibility of moving forward with the peace process.

So here you have the finding of the commission that corrects many of the distortions that are prevalent here in Washington today, and even perpetuated after the report was issued. The same people and the same institutions and the same officials -- some of them in the government -- continue to perpetrate those distortions and those misinformation -- let me put it this way, in order not to say lies -- about the origins and about how the situation evolved.

But let me tell you something else. We believe that the original intent is the occupation -- occupation, military occupation by Israel of the Palestinian territories of the Palestinian people -- the longest military occupation in recent history is responsible for the situation in the Palestinian territory. And therefore for anyone to speak about violence in the Palestinian territories without referring to Israel's occupation and

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the atrocities committed by the Israeli army throughout the last 33 years -- 34 years in fact in a month -- or in less than a month, in a week -- Israel will of course complete its 34th year of military occupation of the Palestinian territories. Israel is responsible for what we are witnesses today.

I assume that in any situation anywhere in the world any normal people would not tolerate that their country, that their people would be denied their very basic human and political rights for self-determination and remain quiet. We are the only people who are apt to remain quiet under foreign military occupation. I assume if Washington God forbid came under foreign military occupation, I would assume that people here in Washington would ask the people of Washington at least to protest -- say not to occupation. In the case of the Palestinians, if we say no we are at -- we are told that this is violence. So you have somebody coming to your house with tanks and armies -- violating every single right of the Palestinian people. And yet we are asked to not even protest.

And I am focusing on this point because we are told today that cessation of violence is the condition sine qua non for in the future for tackling the political issue. And so there is unfortunately in the process an attempt to focus on the issue of protests by the Palestinians while ignoring the overwhelming crimes by the way that are committed by the Israeli government and not considering them as violence.

For example, the use of excessive force by Israel, which was condemned by every single international organization -- the use of bulldozers to uproot 23,000 olive trees in the Palestinian territory is not considered as an act of violence, and we do not see an outrage here in Washington by neither the citizens of a democratic government for those atrocities. The director of the International Red Cross in Israel described those acts by Israel to mild war crimes because Israel under the (fourth ?) Geneva Convention is responsible for providing protection for people under occupation. Yet Israel, instead of providing protection, it uses American-made helicopters, tanks, weapons to destroy Palestinian civilian quarters. If Israel is the other occupying power other than Serbia. Sharon is the only other leader in the world other than Milosevic who uses F-16 airplanes to bombard a prisoner -- according to him -- in the city of Nazareth, and destroy other Palestinian installations.

So when we talk about violence we are the first to ask for the cessation of violence. But we have to define what is violence. What constitutes violence? Is it people who are trying to protect themselves in their own homes? Everyone knows that Palestinians are not in Tel Aviv. Why we condemn and oppose any act of violence against Israeli cities or Palestinian cities. But remember that Israel has more armed forces today in the West Bank and Gaza than what it used to occupy the West Bank and Gaza in 1967. It uses much more power and force than what it used in 1967. No other country in the world does what the Israelis do to the Palestinians with impunity. That's why we feel that you cannot talk about the issue of cessation of violence without taking those facts into consideration.

We were the first to say yes to the Mitchell report and to the Egyptian-Jordanian peace initiative. Why we said that? Because we really want out of this situation we are in. We are the one who is losing the most as a result of the prevailing situation, because we are the people who are under occupation. We are the people who lost 600 Palestinian lives -- 35 percent of them are children under the age of 17. We are the ones who lost over 800 homes destroyed. So we are the ones -- people -- who have an interest in getting out of the situation. And that's why we say yes to the cessation of violence -- but it is the real violence that is directed against the people.

And that takes me to the second step, and that is an effort -- any effort to get us out of this situation and put us back on track, on the track of the peace process to require first of all that the Israeli army ceases all the measures that they have imposed on the Palestinian territories, which include closure, which includes placing Israeli tanks and armored vehicles in the heart of Palestinian population centers, ending the siege imposed on the Palestinian territories, on Gaza and the West Bank, opening the borders with Jordan and Egypt, allowing the Palestinian people to move freely from one city to the other, to end all the collective punishment measures that are imposed on the Palestinian territories. And I assure you that we and the Palestinian people will -- (inaudible) --



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But to say that the responsibility for violence is on the Palestinians is absolutely going to lead to nowhere. Today for example -- today Mr. Sharansky, the minister of housing of Israel, declared that Israel will build 710 new houses in the settlement. This flies in the face of Mr. Burns and the effort that he is conducting, because remember that we are opposed to settlements not only horizontally but vertically also. We are opposed not to the construction of buildings; we are also opposed to the presence of settlers in our land, because that is a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and of international law.

So no serious effort by anybody will lead us out of this situation unless we have a real commitment that the settlement activity which undermines the territorial basis for the Palestinian state -- if we did not have Jewish settlements in Gaza, we would not have a confrontation with Gaza. If we did not have Jewish settlements in Nablus. There would be no Israeli Army in Nablus to start with to protect those citizens.

So I believe that the most dangerous element in this Palestinian- Israeli confrontation is the settlements. And if the settlements are moved, tomorrow a separation between Palestine and Israel would be possible. But in Camp David and after Camp David the main issue is Jewish settlements, whether it is in Jerusalem or in the West Bank and Gaza, because it is impossible to be able to deal with the issue of security in the presence of settlements. It is difficult to deal with the issue of territory also with the presence of those settlements.

So, while we -- and I know I have taken more time than what was allocated to me, but I think Marwan and Nabil gave me each five minutes from their time. (Laughter.)

So, anyway -- so, we feel that there is an opportunity. This opportunity is serious. It enjoys the support of the international community -- Europe, Russia, the United Nations, even the United States -- support the Mitchell report and the Jordanian-Egyptian peace initiative. But we do not want any mistake about where we stand on those issues. We believe in the implementation of the recommendations simultaneously -- especially the issue of cessation of violence and a cessation of Jewish settlements in the Palestinian territories. Those should be linked within a timetable to the implementation of the other two major elements. One is the restoration of the situation that existed on September 28th, and negotiations on both how to implement -- or mechanisms to implement what has been signed between the two parties and the negotiations on final status. We cannot accept under any circumstances a perpetuation of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory. There has to be a timetable set for concluding the permanent status negotiations, and there has to be also a timetable for implementation of the agreement that was signed in Sharm el Sheik and Wye River, and we are ready to implement our side of those agreements, provided that Israel implements theirs.

I believe that the only way for us to get out of the situation we are in -- because this must be a security issue -- this is a political issue. Again, the original sin is the occupation. Occupation is not normal, and therefore occupation provokes resistance, provokes protest, and no one can expect the Palestinians to remain silent when their freedom and their land is being raped and confiscated. And I thank you very much. (Applause.)

MR. FARSON: Thank you, gentlemen. Let me ask the questions that I received in order. Let me tell you first that there are two kinds of questions, some very specific and some general. I tried to group them in such a way that each ambassador could answer, but also some of them that I will read now are general for everyone, so I wish you would take note of that.

First, with respect to Ambassador Muasher, the question reads: "With its adoption of the Mitchell report, the U.S. seems to have neglected the Egyptian-Jordanian initiative to a secondary role." "Relegated," sorry -- "the Egyptian-Jordanian initiative to a secondary role." How can the provisions of both the Mitchell report and the Egyptian-Jordanian initiative be wed together?" I think this would also apply to Ambassador Fahmy.

Specifically -- let me read off all of them, if you don't mind. This is for all three speakers: "Do you see any use for a future role after the publication of the Mitchell fact-finding commission for Senator Mitchell and the fact-finding mission itself?"

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This question again is a general one: "Usually when diplomats agree to speak out they talk about history rather than current issues. Should we assume therefore that the Jordanian-Egyptian initiative has become history? Is it dead? And, if not, then how does it relate to the Mitchell report?"

To Ambassadors Muasher and Fahmy: "Please comment on the call of the Egyptian-Jordanian proposal for an international monitoring force."

And, finally: "How are you expecting to resolve any differences in the viewpoint among many Arab factions in regard to the peace process?" B. MUASHER: I'll take the first part. I don't think that the Jordanian-Egyptian initiative is dead or even secondary. It is very understandable that the United States and others have chosen to -- wisely so -- to focus their attention in the short term on the Mitchell report, which after all has been prepared by a commission led by a very respected American ex-majority leader, saying, among other things, that settlement activity has to stop, and offering a very balanced report that does not attempt to blame or assign blame on one party or the other, but rather to deal with the situation on the ground. And I think it is extremely wise of the United States to focus now on the Mitchell report.

However, the Mitchell report, according to its own mandate, deals with the short term. It does not deal with the political part of the problem, and it does not offer a long-term solution. And what we propose is that even to arrive at the short term without a long-term framework agreed to a priori will not be possible. Who among the Palestinians is going to be able to go to their people and say, We ask you to continue your frustration in return for at best a long-term interim arrangement offered to you by Israel while settlement activity continues? Who among the Palestinians can do this, unless you offer the Palestinians a political component that provides hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel, that they are not going to even negotiate or engage in open-ended final status negotiations that might go on for another 10 years while another 70 percent settlement expansion takes place. You have little hope of advancing because of the peace process. And therefore I think that the two initiatives have to be worked together -- are worked together. The Mitchell report deals with the short term -- the Egyptian-Jordanian initiative with the long term -- but in a framework where both the short term and the long term have to be agreed to, at least as far as the steps that have to be taken to take us from where we are to where we want to be.

International monitoring force? You know, I don't want to again go into the details of the initiative, but I would suggest that the initiative does not directly deal with this issue at all. And what were the other questions? Future role for Senator Mitchell -- I would not really focus the attention on the persons as much as on the issues. I believe that the United States has taken a very good move in that it has brought back the peace process to the Bureau of the Near East. I think by doing so it is going to make use of the expertise of its own embassies and of its own people in the region, and that is an extremely positive development. We in Jordan know Ambassador Burns very well. He is an extremely balanced person, and we believe also his appointment as special envoy to the Middle East process is a positive one. But we also need to take it beyond the persons, beyond the personalities, to deal with the issues at hand.

MR. FARSON: There are a couple of questions specifically to Ambassador Fahmy, but he also has these general questions that I've already asked before. Let me specifically read the one for him by name: "Ambassador Fahmy, should the parties accept and implement phase one and phase two of the Mitchell report? What will be the Arab expectations of phase three -- that is to say negotiations? What is there to negotiate -- who is there to negotiate with? Sharon, who does not believe in permanent status agreement with the Palestinians?" It's a rhetorical question for you.

There is one general question that I hadn't read before that I am going to read now, so I hope you will also address it: Why aren't we telling the Americans like it is? Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah has turned down President Bush's invitation. Some Gulf states have suspended, if not canceled, arms purchases from the U.S. The state of Qatar finally has closed the trade office, Israel's trade office, as others have done. The question then is, What is it going to take to have the U.S. take a more positive role in regard to the conflict?

FORUM OF THE CENTER FOR POLICY ANALYSIS ON PALESTINE PARTICIPANTS: HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY; NABIL FAHMY, EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S.; AND MARWAN MUASHER, JO

AMB. FAHMY: Thank you. I think Ambassador Muasher answered the general questions quite adequately. Therefore I won't really comment on them at any length. Let me just make one point which relates both to the idea of having Senator Mitchell once again playing a role, and also to the issue of the U.S. role in the future. What's important here are not modalities. That's obvious. In other words, what is the mandate? What are the positions that whoever is going to pursue the file is given to pursue? That I think is the fundamental issue here, and I am comfortable with whatever format the U.S. decides to choose in terms of how it or who it nominates to pursue its Middle East policy. The point that is a focus to me are what exactly are the marching orders he will be given in terms of how to pursue them. And therefore I agree with Marwan -- it's not personalities as much as it is substance. And I welcome Ambassador Burns in his new assignment.

Quickly, on the Jordanian-Egyptian proposal, I know people tend to have short memories and are particularly impatient in this time and age, and with this issue -- particularly they are justifiably so. But the proposal has just been put out there, and I really believe that given the way it's been put out it does provide a time line and a road map upon which to build, which encompasses the Mitchell report and goes beyond that.

So I do believe it has its own -- I do believe it has a lifetime of its own, although it has to be embraced pretty soon. And if you take into account for example when Resolution 242 was adopted and embraced and implemented, you understand what I mean. If you don't embrace it collectively, then its own lifetime tends to shorten. But I think we are far from there, from that point just now.

Arab expectations and who are their negotiators? I said at the beginning I am not overly optimistic; I am just committed to pursuing peace. And I read the facts, the realities, like everybody else does, and I have my own questions about this. But, nevertheless, our expectations should not be less and should not be more than what our rights are. We should continue to pursue them irrespective of who is there and who isn't there. If we can achieve a solution consistent with those rights, including a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, and the West Bank including East Jerusalem -- if we can achieve those rights with the present Israeli government, fine. If we cannot, we should continue to pursue them with whoever is in government in Israel.

The issue of why aren't we telling the U.S. or why aren't we talking to them as it is -- I'm not exactly sure what the question was -- we are. In actual fact we are. We are talking very honestly, very candidly, and I think also very constructively to the U.S. If you want a U.S. engagement, then you have to assume that that is the address where your arguments are addressed. And we, in a very candid, frank and forthcoming manner, do explain positions to the U.S. government, and we believe that there have been some positive changes, or at least the expedition of the process of engagement in different forms. We would hope that in the future we will see more of that.

But in closing on this question, I do share a little bit the sense of frustration and pessimism which is undermined in the question, because it I think also emphasizes the very difficult situation which we face in the region and the importance of moving forward rather quickly. Thank you.

MR. FARSON: The next set of questions are for Mr. Abdel Rahman. Specifically they are: How do you think or what do you think of the prospects of the peace process going on between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, when Mr. Sharon leads the Israeli government?

MR. RAHMAN: Leaves or leads? (Laughter.)

MR. FARSON: Leads. The next question is: Please assess the likelihood of ethnic cleansing or population transfer; that is, the Palestinians being forced out of the West Bank and Gaza under the current circumstances. If this were to happen, what would the Arab countries do?

Let's see, these are very general ones, and I think I will leave you to try to answer these, if you don't mind. And I don't know if we have any more time, but the last question I just received, if I may just quickly mention it is: What is Egypt's and Jordan's position on the issue of refugees? Is that the question? Refugees. Okay, Mr. Abdel Rahman.

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MR. RAHMAN: Well, let me speak first about the -- for one minute -- about the relationship between the Mitchell report and the Jordanian-Egyptian initiative and how we view both the link between the two. We view them as complementary to each other. And we believe that for any diplomatic effort to succeed it has really to present us with a package, the package that includes all the issues linked to each other with a timetable. Otherwise I don't believe there is any chance for success. To try to deal with the issues in a piecemeal manner, disconnecting one from the other -- let's focus now on this issue -- and then after we will look at the others -- is a nonstarter as far as we are concerned. There has to be a linkage, and this linkage should show us the whole map -- the beginning and the end of the road.

Now, whether this brings me to answer the question on Sharon. If this package is there when they implement 20, 30, 40 percent under Sharon, I don't know whether the process will be for Sharon or the process will get rid of Sharon. I mean, you know in the past I believe that the Wye River agreements were instrumental in getting Mr. Netanyahu out of it, because he signed an agreement that he did not implement. I believe that the Madrid peace process led to the defeat of Likud in the elections in 1992. So either you have someone who -- in Israel -- who will respond to the 62 percent of the Israeli public who is calling for cessation of old Jewish settlements, or somebody who will oppose and then have to pay the price. But I believe that if we are serious about moving forward, we have really to deal -- to present this as a package, that -- and again, as I said, because no Palestinian leader will accept or can accept to have an open-ended negotiations, because open-ended negotiations means perpetuation of occupation, and no Palestinian leader can have or can accept that.

The second, the ethnic cleansing, I must tell you it happened once in our history. It happened in 1948. And we are -- I mean, not only us, but everybody is paying the price. And I am telling you it is not going to happen again, whoever asked the question, because this time the Palestinians would rather die in their country, but they are not going to leave. And I am telling you this seriously, and you have to look at the situation today, where you have little kids facing tanks, Israeli tanks -- this means that this people is going to be free, and they are not going to be allowed to be transported, neither in buses or trucks across the border. They will not do it. And so I believe that this is obvious to everyone who is looking at the recent history of the Palestinians. We rather fight and die in our own country than languish in refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan or wherever they are going to go.

But I would hope the international community will not allow the ethnic cleansing. And I hope that the international community, and particularly the United States, will lead an effort, like it did in Kosovo, and not allow this to happen.

We are hopeful, again, that we will not come to that point, for the very simple reason, because we believe that the overwhelming majority of the Israeli public, as well as the overwhelming majority of the Palestinian public, are in support of peace.

Q Are you disappointed that Arafat has not been invited to -- (off mike)?

MR. RAHMAN: Sorry?

Q Are you disappointed that Arafat has not been invited?

MR. RAHMAN: Well, I mean, I think let me answer it by saying the following: I believe that I am -- am I disappointed for Arafat not being invited to the United States? I believe that Yasser Arafat is a principal partner to peace or war in the Middle East, and for the United States to play a credible role it has to deal with all the principal parties, like it deals with Sharon, King Abdullah, President Mubarak. It has to deal with Arafat. Otherwise its effort will not be credible. Thank you. (Applause.)

MR. FARSON: We are just a little over the two o'clock mark, so please thank the speakers and join me in applauding them for a very interesting presentation. (Applause.) Thank you.

END

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ISRAEL POLICY FORUM DISCUSSION TOPIC: THE MITCHELL REPORT PARTICIPANTS: SAMUEL LEWIS, FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO ISRAEL; DAVID MAKOVSKY, THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY; SHIBLEY TELHAMI, TH



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BODY:

MR. SMERLING: On behalf of Israel Policy Forum and its board of directors, I want to welcome you all again IPF's Washington Policy Center, and today's forum. Special guests, to our speakers and those who are here for the first time, most of you know that IPF is an independent nonpartisan group dedicated to a diplomatic resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the American diplomacy necessary to achieve that. We are headquartered in New York. This is the Policy Center, which is IPF's think tank arm.

The report of the Sharm el-Sheikh fact-finding committee, also known as the Mitchell report, is being printed in full this weekend and will be distributed on Monday, along with the responses from the two sides. You have on your tables the full responses and the excerpt from the report -- excerpted version of the report as it appeared in the press.

Along with that will be submitted, probably on Monday, but certainly no later than Tuesday, Secretary Powell's letter thanking the committee and giving his view of the report.

It's coming, needless to say, at a critical point in two of the most relevant cycles in our industry. One is the American political cycle. The second is the -- what's happening on the ground in the Middle East. We have a new administration that has been deprived of the luxury of assembling its Middle East team and developing -- reviewing and developing policy. A process that usually takes months is being condensed into weeks but is still very much in formation. Secretary -- Assistant Secretary Burns had his confirmation hearings yesterday, has not yet been confirmed. That will happen next week.

But more to the point, we're at a deep downturn in another cycle, which is the cycle of Arab-Israeli diplomacy -- and in this case, lack thereof. What became known as the peace process, mediated by the U.S., began 27 years ago and has never been linear. It's always been stops and starts, breakthroughs in



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diplomacy followed by stagnation, punctuated by violence. And the violence usually brings an escalation, then, of diplomacy, in turn to bring it around, sooner or later, back to the table.

But right now we are in the eighth month of some of the most vicious Israeli-Palestinian violence in many years. Most of you probably are aware that to punctuate that point, this morning a large bomb was set off at an entrance to a mall in the beachside town of Netanya. The death toll keeps mounting. Right at -- the latest wire was seven dead, including the terrorist, and some reports are saying close to a hundred wounded.

Israel has already retaliated by shelling the headquarters of Palestinian security in Nablus. But stay tuned.

With this kind of escalation is, of course, the growing danger of it spreading beyond the borders. This week President Assad cut short a trip to Cairo amidst rising tensions with Israel, and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia took a very unusual step of visiting Canada but declining an invitation to the United States. So this report is arriving at a moment when both Arab-Israeli relations and American diplomacy are hanging in the balance and their direction is very unclear. We don't know to what extent the parties are ready or able to take the painful steps to climb down from the many rhetorical trees they've climbed up, to climb back from confrontation. We don't know if American diplomacy can be enough to help them reach that point. But we do know that de-escalation will not happen without American mediation.

And we also know that nobody can ignore the Mitchell report. Will it provide a launching pad for a new American initiative, as Secretary Powell mentioned to Congress? Will it end up sitting in the dead letter department, along with many other unimplemented American proposals that some of the people in this room are quite familiar with?

To discuss these questions -- and of course, the larger question behind the Mitchell report is not the report itself, but the question of what can and should the U.S. do -- we're fortunate to have with us our "A team" of the best people we could think of to take a look at this not only from the point of what's happening today but to give us some perspective. Ambassador Sam Lewis, as you all know, is former ambassador to Israel, head of policy planning. He was at Camp David 1. And Sam, I always like to remark, elevates these discussions with a historical perspective, a feel for getting right to the nub of an issue, and occasionally a flash of wisdom.

MR. LEWIS (?): Rarely

MR. SMERLING: Rarely, I agree, but it does happen. (Laughter.)

David Makovsky, former executive editor of the Jerusalem Post, is a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and a correspondent for U.S. News and World Report. Nobody is better at elucidating the complex texture and interplay of Israeli politics. And David will be leading off today.

Professor Shibley Telhami, who holds the Sadat Chair for Peace and Development at the University of Maryland, is also a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. Shibley is in close contact with many of the principals in Middle East diplomacy and always has his finger on the pulse of the Arab world, and Washington, as well. And Sam is taking his pulse now to see if he's okay.

It's an honor to have all three of you here today. And just to let our guests to know, to remind you, today's session is on the record. We will release a transcript of the session today on Monday, so if you aren't able to take notes, it will be available.

Finally, we're fortunate. Our guests have done something almost unprecedented in the annals of Middle East diplomacy by agreeing to limit their opening remarks to just 10 minutes to prime the pump for the discussion to follow. We purposely kept this panel a small enough group so we can have a real give-and-take. Thank you.

And, David, will you start us off?

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MR. MAKOVSKY: Thanks, Tom. I'm delighted to be here. I just wish it was a different time, given all that's going on, and we continue this descent into, I think, anything -- can only be called communal war, what we're witnessing. And the slide continues, and today in the most vicious way possible, which I'll get back to in a minute.

I'd like to try to keep to the time frame here, and maybe I'll try to speak a bit telegraphically and elaborate more in the questions. I want to address these issues: What do the leaders want? What can be done, should be done in the short term? And can we look beyond the short term and how is the interplay between domestic politics and the peace process. A tall order for 10 minutes.

Anyway, first, the leaders clearly want different things. Yasser Arafat has, to me, a very clear goal. He wants a rescue, he wants to be rescued by the international community, by the United States. That should be obvious to everyone. I don't think -- I think Tom is absolutely right, that the parties themselves cannot get out of this. And I think as much as he talks about the Europeans, I think it's a way to tweak the United States to get more involved. I don't think the Europeans, talking to them, believe that they can pull it off, and European leaders do seem to be calling Mr. Powell.

Sometimes I think for Mr. Arafat the worse it is, the better it is and, namely, the more the violence or the more provocative that would provoke a tough Israeli response, this conflict, which seems to, until the last couple of weeks, kind of been flying under the international radar system, is popping up on that radar system, and the more it pops up on that radar system, the more the chance you'll trigger that system into some sort of an intervention.

Now, Mr. Sharon's approach, perhaps not surprisingly, is exactly the opposite: Don't trigger the intervention -- the international system. Fly below the radar screen. Maybe be seen to be doing more than Barak in terms of response, but don't do so much as to trigger the international system and to trigger, perhaps -- have kind of shocks on the Israeli National Unity government, which has been carefully cobbled together.

So, while Arafat wants to provoke the international system and international intervention, Sharon wants to keep that out, believing if you do that, you'll end up paying for this somehow, to stop the violence; that there should be no reward for stopping violence.

I think many Israelis are spooked by what I would -- what some of you have heard me call the "Hezbollah model" -- I'm not the only one to use that term, obviously; the Hezbollah uses it itself -- which is violence pays. You push Israel out of Lebanon, that's the model for dealing for the West Bank and Gaza, and Israelis were spooked by seeing Hezbollah flags in Gaza. This is something that you could say started with the Gulf War, when it didn't retaliate and now, 10 years after the Gulf War, with Hezbollah claiming credit for pushing Israeli out, Israelis are saying, "Oh my God, we thought we did something that was done to stabilize things in the region." Of course, it did it for its own interest, but if it's being interpreted as weakness, then we've got to be very careful on how we react diplomatically to violence. So very -- two different responses.

Bush and Powell, it seems to me, and I'd be curious to hear what the other panelists say, basically on one hand came into office saying "We're not going to be Clinton. We're not going to be the desk office on the Middle East at the White House," and even in a broader sense, the peace process is not going to dominate U.S. thinking about the Middle East. And as a symbolic sign of that, it dismantled the -- on the seventh floor, the special office of Middle East peace negotiators, SMEC.

But what's happened in recent weeks is that there have been leaders calling for Powell, "Where are you?" And now I think Crown Prince Abdullah has said he's going to Canada but he's not coming to the United States, and when Powell went out to the region to talk about Iraq, he kept hearing about what's going on in the territories.

So what are his parameters? How much can he get involved? And I wonder if this U.S. president, who wants to focus on his tax cut on the Hill and sees his domestic agenda as the number one priority, doesn't want to do anything too controversial that would somehow get the Hill involved in an adversarial way and

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perhaps jeopardize his domestic program. From what we understand, this is what he's been telling Powell, "Don't get me involved," in a way. "If you want to meet Arafat, if you want to do things, fine, but not at such a level that it's going to trigger my own political system."

So, is there a middle road for him? We don't know, but I am concerned about this kind of -- and everyone, I think -- about this kind of slide down this -- this descent into communal war, and I think, apart from all the diplomacy, longer-term, short-term, you need to stabilize the situation on the ground and change the climate on the ground. And I'd like to just mention an example on each side of what needs to happen.

I think on the Palestinian side what we saw today, as upsetting as it is, to me it's even more upsetting when I read a GMCC poll in April that came out, and the question was phrased like this: What is your feeling about suicide bombing operations against Israeli civilians in Israel? Okay, we're talking about "civilians in Israel"; sometimes the question is asked about settlers, military in the territories -- "civilians in Israel." And some was "very support"; some was "support," but it was 73.7 percent, okay, of Palestinians. This is last month; this is not six years ago. I think you have to see it against this context and, therefore, it's not just the events, but it's the broader climate, and I'm going to get to the climate on the other side, too, but I think this needs to be said.

Last week we saw killers of these boys taking the blood, smearing it on the caves. You can always find crazy people doing crazy things. The point is not what they did as much as what sort of a reaction should have been elicited. Just like when he took the blood and the lynching, and things like that.

Killing children is awful on all sides, but I think that when you see these things, it gets to what President Clinton has called -- not an Israeli leader, President Clinton of the United States, called "the culture of violence." And I don't think enough attention has been paid to that. And we have to deal with this major issue. And it's not just security cooperation -- the Shinbad (ph) and Dakhraan (ph) and Rajuh (ph). Anti-incitement has been thrown around. There has not been enough of a systematic study on what does it mean, "anti-incitement"? It's not just something for a committee; I think all of us have to do much more in understanding this issue, more -- but if we're going to talk about the climate, this has to be addressed.

Now, this thing came home to me also when I was just traveling in Egypt and Jordan and I saw Arab satellite TV, which I think is a new potent force. Many of us didn't understand it sufficiently. And what you're seeing is a lot of angry people in the Arab world. And I think it's fueled by -- I felt the pictures didn't always give a balanced view of what it is. I'm sure people say that about Israel. But I just -- the goriness of it all; it was like taking two ideas, Arab nationalism and commercialism, and they meet at tabloid television and it's just in your face, when I'm in Cairo, Amman, I'm sure in the West Bank, all over the Arab world, all seeing these same pictures.

You go into the operating rooms and see bullet wounds, how they're operating on bullet wounds. It's not being made up. But -- it's happening on all sides. But it's all part of this inflaming that's happening, which is very bad. I have some broader views on some of this, but I don't want to take up more time because I don't have much time.

So I'd like to get on the Israel side. And here I'm going to get into this whole issue. And I can only quote George Mitchell, what he wrote to Abe Foxman yesterday. I don't think that the two here are equivalent exactly, terrorism and settlements. Madeleine Albright says there's no equivalence between a bulldozer and killing someone. So I don't want to be misinterpreted here, but I do think somehow this issue of settlements has to be addressed.

In some text -- I mean, Mitchell put it in 15 points. He said, "I didn't link one to the other, I said there's 15 points." And I can read from Mitchell's letter, and that's what he's referring to. So I don't want to be attacked here in terms of equivalence, but I do think there's a climate, I think, that has to be addressed on dealing with the settlement issue. And I'd like to deal with that. I don't have much time, so the longer-term stuff I'll have to leave for Q&A.

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But on the settlement side, I think it seems clear we should begin with facts; what are we talking about? Dennis Ross, who now works at our institute, said the U.S. government's -- their assessment is that 1.7 percent of the West Bank is taken up by settlements. Now, that does not include access roads, that does not include East Jerusalem, but 1.7 percent. Peace Now told me 1.36 percent, same -- I think Yasser Abdel Rabbo said during Camp David, saying Israel could agree to concede much more; after all, settlements are only 2 percent of the West Bank. So that should be taken into account. Obviously, with access roads, it's more.

But I could also say as a fact, having written a book on Oslo, and I'm checked this with Palestinians and everyone, that Rabin repeatedly refused at Oslo to say that settlements would be against Oslo. Palestinians tried on many occasions. I would argue it might be against a certain spirit, but it is not against the letter. In the end, they had something very amorphous, which we can get into if there's time but I don't want to get off on that right now.

I just think that the settlement issue has been the one issue that Mitchell pointed to which has been an Achilles' heel for Israel, both domestically and in terms of U.S.-Israel relations, most famously with the loan guarantees debate of 1991 and 1992. But given its controversy, it's also something that limits Sharon politically inside Israel. He can't go too far because there's not as much the support.

If I would have one final point, it would be this: I think we should do all ourselves a favor and have a differentiated approach here. And those of you who know me know I love maps of the West Bank, because I think we can't understand what's going on in the abstract without understanding maps. And so here I would just say that I think it's very important to know where this -- you know, we're talking about there are three blocks that was discussed at Camp David that Yasser Arafat said will be part of Israel.

We want to be compensated, as Palestinians, by getting land swaps, but those areas will be Israeli. As far as I can understand, 80 percent of what Ehud Barak built in his period was within those blocks, and with Sharon, he has been building primarily -- Natan Sharansky as housing minister has been -- (phrase in Hebrew). Now, of course, if those blocks are pushed outward, then that is just as complicating of a factor as they would be if they were located somewhere else, and you could check these things, as their confiscation of new land, et cetera, et cetera.

I think there's got to be a formula, and I think -- my nuance on Mitchell is that I just think that by speaking in undifferentiated terms, he doesn't do a service to the debate, because the debate has to be said, where you're expanding things outward, you're complicating the situation. Where you're expanding inward, you are just confirming the deal that Yasser Arafat said is going to happen. So -- and I think Israelis make that distinction, and I think we need -- when we start issuing all these data and stuff, we have to start issuing them with maps on what's -- where's new hilltops going up, because that is complicating. And even if it is only 1.7 percent of the West Bank, again, it's like you divide a pizza, this isn't even the crust. But it's symbolism, you know, you could say, but if it's expanding inward, it's not, and it should be seen differently.

I think some of this idea of natural growth is not exactly the way it's portrayed, but the point is I think we do need a differentiated view, but we cannot ignore the settlements issue. And I think the Israeli government would be making a mistake if it doesn't understand how it affects the climate. Even though the Israeli government says "That's Oslo-plus," and they're right, it is Oslo- plus, and Arafat isn't doing even Oslo. So you're asking Israel to go beyond the agreement when they're not doing the agreement. And in fact, Israel said at Camp David it would take down all the settlements outside the blocks, so you can't say the settlements led to the intifada. That's the most ridiculous thing, in that immediate sense. But you could say it was pent-up frustration over eight years; I would argue Camp David wasn't a graduate seminar on Tibetan gourmet cooking. It was done to end the occupation.

But leave all this aside for now. I think somehow we've got to deal with the climate, and if there was one major error of the last eight years, it is this failure to understand how the climate affects the negotiations, the obsession of the negotiations. Without looking at what's going on around the the negotiations was one of the biggest factors, in my view, for the trouble we're in now.

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Thank you very much. (Applause.)

MR. SMERLING: Thank you, David. Shibley?

MR. TELHAMI: Thanks. It's always a pleasure to speak in this forum.

I would like to make three points: one about the narrative of the Mitchell report; second, about the context in which the recommendations were made about settlements; and third, in terms of the implications for U.S. policy and how the U.S. is likely to deal with the Mitchell report.

I think the narrative part is extremely important. Everybody is focused on the recommendations, but the narrative is extremely important. If you read the narrative, in terms of explaining why the intifada emerged, there are some very important facts. Although the report very clearly says, "We have no basis on which to conclude that there was a deliberate plan by the PA to initiate a campaign of violence at the first opportunity; or to conclude that there was a deliberate plan by the government of Israel to respond with lethal force."

That is a bottom line position which essentially explains the findings of this particular commission. In essence, they're providing a narrative, and in fact, they go on with further explanation of how they saw what happened. While they don't assign deliberate blame to either side, they actually describe the narrative of how the intifada emerged. They say, for example, that the Sharon visit did not cause the "Al-Aqsa Intifada. But," they say, "it was poorly timed and the provocative effect should have been foreseen; indeed, it was foreseen by those who urged that the visit be prohibited." And that, in their judgment, includes American officials who did foresee such a fact and actually warned Mr. Barak not to let it go through.

They certainly say that both sides did not use restraint, once the violence started. They also describe the first days of events. They describe that the Palestinian demonstrators were, quote, "unarmed" and the Israeli response was "overwhelming"; they say it wasn't deliberate, but they criticize the fact that Israel didn't use other methods to control the demonstrations.

If you look at this narrative, which is provided by a very serious commission that is acceptable to both Israelis and Palestinians, that is planned and supported by the United States, it certainly goes against conventional wisdom in this town. And I think the beginning, if anything, this should help transform the debate from what has been a politicized debate of taking issue with the Israelis saying that Palestinians deliberately started the intifada, were looking for an opportunity; with the Palestinians saying the Israelis were looking for an opportunity to smash the Palestinians and cow them into accepting what was proposed by Barak, that should be put on hold, and I think we should start with a different narrative, and this is the narrative that a credible group comes with.

And that should help us, in a way, transform the debate into a different kind of debate, where do you take it from here, and not fall back into this conventional wisdom here, which is that it was all deliberate, it was all started, it was all therefore up to one party or the other to put an end to it.

So I find that as very, very important part of the report. As much as the recommendation and the findings, the narrative is extremely important, and I think it should be seriously talked about and debated and mapped out and -- because I think we ought to use this particular report as an occasion to have a different kind of debate, which is much more constructive, on how to proceed.

The second point I want to make has to do with the settlement issue. I mean, a lot of the debates here and particularly the comments I've heard were directed largely at the fact that the settlements issue goes, quote, "beyond Oslo," and there are different interpretations of what Oslo -- certainly the Palestinians and the Israelis have different interpretations of what Oslo meant on settlement.

But I think it's very important to understand the context for which these recommendations were made. I mean, the commission was trying to find how we might get out of this mess. And it is a very difficult environment every day, for both sides. We've seen the effect of it today, and we see it every day, on the Palestinian and the Israeli side. And how do you -- what are the absolute minimum requirements to get



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out of it? And I think, on the Israeli side, it's a little bit clearer what's required. They required an end to violence, an end to the intifada, and certainly an end to terrorism. And they need to see that as something tangible.

When you look at the Palestinian side -- and here, I think, it's very important to look at the context of the Palestinian public opinion, not just look at what Arafat may be able to sign or may be persuaded to sign -- you will find that it's going to be very, very tough for any Palestinian leader, Arafat or anybody else, in this environment to deliver any agreement at all without certain conditions, and especially if what is not happening is going back to negotiations with the possibility of a final status agreement. After all, the Palestinians have just rejected a very significant final status agreement. What is being talked about is going back to a negotiation that will be much more modest, with no particular end in sight.

And so the fear on the ground is the change in the reality. That is, obviously the Palestinian fear has always been that unilateral Israeli acts can change the reality on the ground. The absolute minimum condition would be to make sure that there will be no change on the ground.

And in this particular case, the settlement issue is probably the most painful issue, I think, and one has to come to grips with it, for the Palestinians. I think it is an issue that is visible.

I do not believe that any Palestinian leader can give in on this issue, any modifications like accepting growth in settlements, accepting a growth in demographics. I personally do not believe that any Palestinian leader can sign an agreement of that sort and sell it and then deliver quiet on the front. I don't think it's possible. And I think this is an honest -- I think it's a very honest interpretation of what is absolutely minimally required.

Now we may all decide, as analysts and -- you know, that therefore it's not possible to have an agreement, which may be the case. But we have to confront the reality. We have to confront what is minimally acceptable for the Israelis and Palestinians, and not delude ourselves, as we did at Camp David, that there is no such thing as a red line for publics. We made that mistake already before. I think right now it's very important to come to grips with the reality on the ground. As I said, it may be impossible for Sharon to do, and therefore, you know, a deal is not possible.

I don't think it's possible for the Palestinians to go into the next stage of the negotiations without some very clear action on the settlement issue. And that's something that -- the commission has the right to make that kind of finding. It's a finding. It's a recommendation in the context of a finding. And then it's really up to the Israelis and the Palestinians to accept whether they can proceed with it or not.

And by the way, this issue of are they -- stopping violence and stopping settlements -- are they tied together, are they conditioned with each other, reference to the letter that Mitchell and Senator Warren Rudman sent to Mr. Foxman, in which they said, "No, no, they're not tied together; they're just different recommendations" -- actually, the tying together -- I'm actually surprised that the Israelis were concerned about the tying together. I would -- if I were in the Palestinian position, I would be extremely worried about the tying together, because the international community has taken a position that is completely opposed to settlements. And if you tie the two together, if you have an agreement, and six months later terrorism breaks out, then Israel has a -- let's say there is more legitimacy to Israel's pursuing settlement activity if that happens, because if you tie them together, say, "Well, they're not delivering on terrorism" -- in fact, the settlement issue has been a broader issue about which there has been a more general agreement in the international community and also a more consistent U.S. position than any other events on the ground. And so it indeed should not be tied. I think those are just a -- it's a question of listing conditions that, I think legitimately, one can argue are minimal conditions for moving forward.

Let me just make the third point, which is how the U.S. is likely to react.

It would be very strange for the U.S. not to endorse the report, for a lot of reasons. One is that the report has international legitimacy, that this is essentially a commission that the U.S. helped put together, that it was first and foremost reporting to the U.S. president, as well as to the secretary-general of the

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U.N., and because it is a, you know, a minimalist and balanced report. It would be very hard for the U.S. not to endorse it. The question is how to endorse it and how closely to be tied to it.

I would think that the U.S. clearly is going to not seem to be accepting every single specific term, but rather endorsing it more broadly, and not necessarily tying itself to its implementation, because it'll probably, as the report is intended to be recommendations, will essentially leave it to the parties to decide whether they want to implement them or not, and then work with them if, in fact, they want the U.S. to play a role in implementing it. But the U.S. cannot differentiate itself from it.

The worst thing that the U.S. would do is to actually take up the issue of settlements and make the kind of recommendations that were made by David. (Laughter.) I think that if you start to break up -- if you start breaking up -- and you know we agree on a lot of things, but on this issue, I think the danger here is to start breaking this issue down, because it'll blow up in every Arab and Palestinian's face, and it'll blow up in the U.S. face.

The U.S. has a consistent position on the settlements, which is categorical. If you start saying a settlement here, but not there, a settlement in this category, but not there, and legitimize any kind of settlement activity by default, by talking about demographic settlement or by talking about settlement blocks, I think it'll put the U.S. in an impossible position down the road. It's a slippery slope that will be seen to be a retreat from previous American positions.

So the worst thing is to be very specific. The worst thing is to make exceptions, because the minute you start making exceptions, you are creating loopholes that trucks can drive through, and nobody wants that. I don't think that it serves the Israelis' interests, I don't think it serves the Palestinians' interest, and I most certainly don't think it would serve the U.S. interests. So I don't expect that to happen, and I think it would be a mistake if it were to happen.

Thanks. (Applause.)

MR. LEWIS: Well you fellows have said it all so there's not much to add, actually.

I'm delighted to be here again, before this august body, on what I think is honestly one of the most important topics that IPF has considered in a long time.

I want to make several points about why the U.S. ought to do what Shibley thinks it will, that is endorse it but in fact ought to do more than just pallidly endorse it, then I'll give some reasons why I think it's very difficult for them to do that and what those reasons are, and then I'll tell you what I think will actually likely happen.

First of all, it is important to realize that while this is quite an extraordinary report, it is not a blueprint for a solution, it is not an outline of a peace settlement. It's a way to stop a war and get back to something approximating negotiation. And it derives directly from the Sharm el-Shiekh agreement among the parties last October. So we can't expect more from it than it is. And even if every bit of it were accepted by the two parties, you wouldn't have moved once inch closer to resolving some of the things that blew up Oslo and Taba -- the refugee issue, the Jerusalem issue, the boundaries in certain respects.

But what it is is quite extraordinary, because as I was thinking back over the history of this torturous problem, it has been decades since there was a credible, thoughtful, balanced, multilateral initiative involving major players and with the full participation, but not the domination, of the United States. It's hard to realize how long it's been since anybody except the U.S. has been "directing the orchestra."

Now, admittedly, this commission was convened by President Clinton with the reluctant concurrence of the Palestinians and the Arabs, and slightly less reluctant acceptance of the Israelis. But when you put together a commission that has the longest-running Turkish president and the most prestigious politician probably, in Turkey's history, the minister of foreign affairs of Norway and the foreign minister of Europe -- and that's what Solana in fact is although Europe doesn't quite have a foreign policy; they have a foreign minister and that's a start -- and a highly respected Italian political leader, to boot. And then you



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have a bipartisan participation of the kind of people that George Mitchell and Warren Rudman represent in the history of our politics and of the Senate.

You have a unique sort of body. Now, they don't represent governments, but you can't ignore this kind of commission report like you could ignore a whole lot of other kinds of reports quite so easily.

Moreover, it involves Europeans, a Middle Eastern leader -- Turkey -- and Americans. It doesn't involve any Arab leaders, and Arab leaders have been part, of course, of the various multilateral efforts that have been convened by the Clinton administration two or three times to try to head off crises. But it comes in the wake of a really significant initiative by Jordan and Egypt, fronting for the Palestinians, to try to get the train back on the track. So it's a moment in which there is uniquely before us a document and a proposal that represents a lot of nations, not just our own brilliance, and I think that's an important fact.

Secondly, it is an extraordinary document. And I agree with what Shibley said about the narrative. I think it's remarkably eloquent, about as objective as one can be about a very emotional topic; balanced. And it would be wonderful if we could use that narrative to change the discussion in this city. That, I think, is a totally impossible dream, but it certainly would help. I think particularly in certain areas of the press, and certainly in areas of the Congress and the public, the mantras about who planned it are so well embodied that they can't be dispelled by even a very eloquent narrative at this point.

Now, the second reason why this has to be taken very seriously is the downward spiral of events, which David has talked about, and I don't think we need to belabor. Every day, every week makes it more and more apparent there is not an easy answer to force; force is not an easy answer to this problem. The Palestinians aren't going to say "uncle." And guerrilla warfare can go on, as we've seen all over the world, for decades without reflecting the balance of military forces. And moreover, the bitterness and the bloodshed and the kind of violence is becoming increasingly brutal on both sides, and that means that it becomes harder and harder for the publics to accept anything other than more fighting.

And political leaders lose maneuverability with every atrocity.

The third reason why it's important at this moment was what I've already mentioned. You have on the table an initiative, a parallel initiative with some important elements in it in the Jordanian- Egyptian- Palestinian proposal. And we haven't had -- let's remember, we have not had in years anything sensible from Arab players as proposals during the period when the United States has been making all of the running.

And then finally, there is another reason to take this very seriously if I were in the administration today, and that's the lesson of history. I'm supposed to be the historian here, right? (Laughter.) This is history not about the Middle East. At the beginning of another administration, which I was serving in, former Secretary Cy Vance and former British Foreign Secretary David Owen presented to the new Clinton administration a laboriously elaborated effort to resolve the Bosnian crisis, at a moment when it was just about to spiral downhill the way this one is about to spiral now. They had been working on it for months under a U.N. mandate. They had spent endless time dealing with the parties. They came forward with a very interesting, balanced proposal.

Clinton had, of course, in the campaign said that Bush was much too easy on the parties and we ought to get in there and really bash the Serbs and do something about it. And then when he came into office, he didn't have the slightest notion what to do about it. And the very first week of the administration, before any of the players were in place except the Cabinet, they sat down informally and decided to throw the Vance-Owen proposal out the window.

Now, Warren Christopher, the new secretary of State, had been Vance's deputy, let's remember, in the Carter administration, and were close friends. And Vance was convinced that their proposal was exactly what the administration would want to have and certainly would take it very seriously. They got rid of it in about 15 minutes -- that's maybe a little unfair -- and instead, in the first month, adopted the brilliant

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idea of sending Warren Christopher around Europe to see if he could sell the idea of lifting the arms embargo and striking against the violators, our lift and strike.

And the Europeans thought that wasn't such a hot idea, and we didn't press it, and the result was, Vance-Owen went down the tube. And nothing replaced it for the next three years.

And eventually, after thousands of people had died, Clinton came to realize that the NATO allies were about to have to evacuate their troops -- that is, under U.N. auspices -- and we were going to have to evacuate them. Otherwise, they couldn't get out of Bosnia. So maybe we better get more involved, and that led ultimately to Dayton. And if you look at Dayton and what came out of Bosnia, it has remarkable parallels to the Vance-Owen agreement.

I give you this history only to say that particularly new administrations are often confronted with things they didn't anticipate having to deal with. And certainly that was true of this one. And certainly I think it is true of the Bush administration today, with respect to the Middle East.

But if they don't take seriously multilateral possibilities, we end up in a very unilateral mess a bit later on.

Now what are the cons? Why wouldn't you want to take it seriously enough to really put your shoulder to the wheel and try to make something happen out of it, not just endorse it?

Well, the first reason is, President Bush has a totally different set of priorities -- energy, missile defense, and tax cut and education. That's four big packages. And he is a CEO type. He wants to lay out his agenda. He wants to delegate people to carry it out. He wants to stick to it and insist that he not be thrown off message. And he's been very good at doing that, so far. And this throws him off message completely, so that to the extent he gets sucked in, despite everything, he's going to try to dump it all on Colin Powell, if possible. But I think we all know that we have managed to spoil the players in the Middle East over the years, sufficiently so that it's very hard to convince Israelis or Arabs that the U.S. is serious unless the American president is visibly involved in something. That goes back all the way at least to the Carter administration.

Nonetheless, they were not ready for this crisis. They wanted to take several months to think through what had happened, draw their conclusions, and ultimately decide exactly how to go about it, and do it differently than Clinton, because you're quite right; anything Clinton did was bad, according to these guys.

So it's against his priorities, and I'm sure that in the White House right now political advisers are telling Bush, "Just give this a light touch. Stay away from it. Let Powell deal with it. Endorse it. Don't do anything else. Certainly don't get into a problem with Congress."

And that brings me to the second problem. This administration, I think, is ultimately quite likely to be very divided over what to do about Israel and the Palestinians. They're trying to conceal the divisions up to this point, but there are those who believe very strongly, as some in this room do, that Arik is right and that Arafat is the problem, and he'll never make peace with anybody, and the Palestinians have really got to be hit hard enough and long enough until they finally understand that they're going to have to play Arik's way. And there are plenty of people in this town who believe that.

There are also some in the Congress, quite a number, who believe it or have come to believe it over the last nine months as a result of the intifada and the very correct arguments that Israel went an extraordinary way and received many slaps in the face in exchange.

Now, because this is not on his priority list, as I think one of you already suggested, surely Bush will try very hard to avoid getting crossways with Congress over this issue. And in Congress, there isn't much disposition to push the administration to endorse the Mitchell report. There are a few isolated voices. But a very influential senator said to somebody -- to a group of us the other day, "Don't expect us to be able to convince the administration to do anything about the Mitchell report; that's the administration's problem.

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They don't know what they're going to do; they're not even organized to do it yet. But we're not going to make it any easier for them -- we, friends of Israel." And I think that's a good prediction.

So the opposition, both some within the administration, probably centered in the Defense Department and in parts of the White House, and some in the Congress, makes it a tough call, a very tough call. And all that is before you get to Sharon.

Now, all of us know enough about my old friend, Sharon, to know that he genuinely believes what he says. He genuinely believes that settlements are part of the crucial defense structure of the state of Israel. And the design of the settlements isn't by chance, it's a design which he designed, starting back in 1977. And it's laid out in a way to make it easier to defend the core interests of Israel without giving up large chunks of contiguous territory and strategic areas. It doesn't mean you can't give up any territory, but it means that there are certain settlements that are there not just because of ideological reasons, but because of strategic reasons, in his concept. And it's true, of course, too he has a cabinet who is not filled with people who are anxious to get rid of the settlements, or even to freeze them for 10 minutes. He has some in the cabinet who might like to, but he certainly has plenty who don't.

So Sharon's personal view of settlements and the danger of ever freezing in areas where he regards continued expansion as strategically important, and there are several of those, is a huge problem for a new president to confront.

It isn't as if we haven't tried with Sharon before. And as a matter of fact, every American president since 1977 at least has had rather stormy discussions at one time or another about settlements with Israeli leaders; some Likud, some -- (chuckles) -- unfortunately Labor.

But the basic point that we have never been prepared as a government to use any muscle on this issue, I believe, remains today. It's not just Bush seemed to have gotten on well with Sharon and is impressed with his argument that until the violence stops you can't expect us to sit down again with these people. That's a fairly persuasive argument, but I do think it goes much deeper than that. I don't think that the American Congress or the American public, though they disapprove, many of them, of a lot of the settlement activities and would prefer Israelis to do something different, that doesn't mean that they're ready to sacrifice what they view as a very important relationship of the United States over this issue, and particularly to go into battlements with a man like Sharon who is, to say the least, hard to persuade.

Now, Shimon Peres runs around and tries to suggest there's some formulas short of freezes -- total freezes -- which can work, and has some ingenious -- you have to hand it to Peres, you know, he really is incredible -- (chuckles) -- that he can still come up with these formulas to deal with impossible issues. And whether he's working for Shamir one time or Sharon another time or himself and Rabin, he's always creative. I think of the two creative ideas which apparently have been discussed, one fuzzing it up -- vertical, horizontal, demographic concepts or a temporary freeze -- I think the only one of those that has the slightest possible chance would be a very short-term, temporary freeze, if you got enough for it.

The situation is very different than it was in 1978 at Camp David when Begin, by the hardest, extracted a three-months settlements freeze out of Carter -- extracted from Begin a three-months settlements freeze. He thought he was getting more but that's all he got. But he did get three months. But what was he getting it for? He was getting it for peace with Egypt. Now, what's Sharon getting for a three-months freeze? Let's just make the analogy -- or what's their Cabinet getting for it, a chance to go back to the table? Well, maybe that's a possibility, only because one of the key things that the Israelis are insisting on, I think, is that this cooling-off period mentioned in the report -- not exactly in the same paragraph -- (chuckles) -- a cooling-off period is important to Israel before it carries out some of the things it would do to see if the violence really subsides.

Maybe you could marry that cooling off concept to a temporary settlements freeze. It seems to me that's the only way you could conceivably get any kind of freeze out of the Sharon government, and even that might blow up his Cabinet, though I rather doubt it.

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The fourth thing that is against our getting into the lists on this, in addition to priorities and fights within the administration and fights with the Congress, and the Sharon obstacle, is a fear of failure; early failure. Let's remember that we're only three, four months into this administration. They're still making their impression on the world -- and on themselves, but mostly on the world -- and it has not been all entirely favorable so far on the world.

An early demonstration by Bush and Powell that they were really going to put the heat on the Sharon government for a temporary or any kind of settlements freeze, or some of the other things in the report, for that matter, that didn't succeed would say an awful lot to the Arab world, to Saddam Hussein, to our European allies, to people around the world; Moscow, China. "Eh, these guys ain't so tough after all. They can't even handle Israel." That's not a message, I would submit, that George Bush wants to send at this stage in his administration. It would be easier to send it much later, if you were ever going to send it.

So for those four reasons, I don't think we will do more than pallidly endorse it, not have a confrontation about it, let Powell carry on a diplomatic minuet with the players, and try to figure out how we're going to handle the U.N. Security Council. Because, don't forget, this report goes from Clinton -- (chuckles) -- from Bush; I guess it goes from Bush. Clinton's a little late for him to send it, although he actually started it -- going from Bush to the secretary-general. The secretary-general will undoubtedly disseminate it officially. One of the Arab members or one of their friends will bring it before the council, there will be a council debate, and the United States will have to take a position. Now, that's one reason why we ought to endorse it, because we ought to endorse it again in the council.

Endorsing it doesn't mean you do anything about it. It just means you endorse it. What really has to happen, if much of this is to get done, is far more than a U.S. endorsement. It's got to have the muscle and the energy of a U.S. administration deeply involved in flogging it over the next six or eight months, along with other players, but with our energy behind carrying it out, not just endorsing it. And that, I suspect, is not very likely. (Applause.)

MR. SMERLING: Well, on that cheerful note, Sam, we'll begin our discussion.

Let me start it off by asking this. I think Sam made a fairly persuasive and accurate summary of the arguments against the U.S. flogging the proposal, pushing it, that were likely to come from the quarters he described. But I'd like to ask our panelists to address the other side of the risks and costs to the United States of not pushing it. Some people glibly, you know, say, "Well, you know, it can spread, it can escalate," and so forth. Others say, "No, this can go on for a long time and there are not really vital American interests involved just in the Arab-Israeli dimension of this."

So what's the down side? If we just heard from the White House, what would, let's say, the State Department come back and say why -- what are the dangers of not flogging it?

MR. TELHAMI: If I may pick this up a bit, I mean, I agree, up to a point, that, you know, you heard from my remarks about, you know endorse it. But I appreciate the fears that the administration has, that I think Sam did -- you know, expressed very well, that they're afraid of failure, and there is a good chance that they can't enforce it and, therefore, they have to distance themselves to some extent.

But I think there are two important points to be made. One is, it's crucial to take positions on principle that are consistent with U.S. previous positions. And in that sense, even if the U.S. doesn't push hard or can't bring it about, the parties are going to try a number of things in the next two, three months, and we all know that short of something diplomatic, it's going to get worse and they're going to have to search for another way, and you would have a marker to come back to, to possibly engage in the debate.

The second point I want to make is that while the administration may not want to put all its diplomatic effort on implementing this particular report, or the recommendations of this report, it's obvious that the U.S. needs to have a more visible, active role in Arab- Israeli peace process. You know, whatever that role is, it may not necessarily include putting forth immediate proposals that, therefore, people were able to judge it domestically, particularly. But it's clear that there is a vacuum, there's a perceived vacuum that is costing the U.S. with -- not only in the Middle East, but the Europeans, other

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parties in the international community. The U.S. needs to engage in a way -- it is more engaged than its reputation, but by other means. But it needs to send signals that it is engaged, and it needs to find a formula that would provide a platform that would enable possible side deals, it would provide a cover, even if there is a possible secret deal between the parties, you still need the public diplomacy, and that's lacking, and it has to be in some way related to some of the recommendations that are here, and also some of the recommendations that are in the Egyptian-Jordanian proposal.

MR. MAKOVSKY: Shibley and I often agree on things more than we disagree, but I think on this issue, I think we should go for the art of the feasible over what some might argue is the desirable.

I'll tell you why; because, as Mitchell himself points out in his annex of this letter that he just released on U.S. views on settlements in the past, the U.S. has articulated so many times its views on this issue, viewing it as an obstacle, but the question is what happens on the ground. And I would argue that anything you could get from Sharon on settlement limitations -- and I don't believe you can get a settlement freeze, and I think most people would say that -- anything you could get from him would have a certain value that no other Israeli leader could provide, given who he is; that he is Ariel Sharon, the architect of the settlement movement.

And so you might say, "That's half a loaf, it's not a full loaf, I'm going to stand on principle on a full loaf," but then you have no loaf. And I think it's better to set certain things down with this Israeli government that's doable; and the same on the Palestinian side what I think needs to happen, because I don't think the discourse should all be about settlements. But as what happened today, a reminder that the violence has to stop and there has to be a new dynamic.

We're right now talking about really a stabilization package that would just -- not bring peace but, you know, stop the slide. Then I think we've got to get beyond tactics and say where do we want to go, because I do think that this thing does have a life of its own. Each one is saying it's about stamina, we could outlast the other. Yasser Arafat seems to be, to me, like Mohammed Ali in his later years, the "rope-a-dope" strategy, you know, "Hit me some more, and I'll tire you out before you tire me out." And I think this approach, which somehow fits what some would argue in this town about benign neglect, means let it all blow up because the worse it is, the better it is. And I just don't buy that. And maybe it's because I've lived there and I know about a lot of innocent people on both sides will be killed.

And so I would just say, do what you can do and create the change, put it in ways that I would say Sharon could digest, so he doesn't have to talk about linkages and the like, but affect what's going on on the ground. And if you keep talking about high principle that is divorced from political reality, in my view you've got a lot of lofty ideas, but you've had that for 30 years and it hasn't really gotten us that far.

MR. TELHAMI: David, let me just respond a little bit. I know that we haven't given Sam the chance yet, but this is an important point to make. And I think that my position is exactly on what's feasible. That is, it's not the principle. I mean, the principles are way too complicated to deal with here.

I could tell you, as someone who follows the issue on the ground, that I cannot imagine, I just absolutely -- and I would stake my, you know, career, academic career, scholarly career on it -- I cannot imagine that an agreement that would take half a loaf on a settlement freeze in the context of a -- ending an intifada and returning to the negotiating table with no particular end can work.

I just don't see it. You might be able to persuade a Palestinian official to do it. They may be inclined to. They can't implement it.

And that's a fact that I'm -- it's not a -- it's not just a -- it's not a philosophical disagreement, it's a disagreement about how we read the situation on the ground. I read it completely differently from you. I read the intensity of the feelings on the ground completely different from you. And I would hasten to say there was a lot of misreading -- and we have to look back -- about what was going on, on the ground before Camp David and after Camp David. Let's not make that mistake. That's what I'm talking about.

And I think it may therefore lead us to the conclusion -- it may therefore lead us to the conclusion that it's impossible to get back to the negotiating table. I mean, it may be -- that may be a reasonable



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conclusion, that Sharon cannot deliver what would be required for Arafat to do what he needs to do. That's something we have to assess. I think it's a legitimate and genuine discussion that must take place. But I don't think we ought to delude ourselves that it's doable by finessing or playing with language or taking a half of loaf. That's not where we are right now, and that's why the disagree is on our assessment on what's feasible; it's not an assessment about what is good and principle and compromising.

MR. LEWIS: Let me just add this one point. The administration can't avoid reacting. They have to react to this report officially. They're reacting unofficially so far.

And they -- and yet the report doesn't -- is not self- implementing in any way, shape, or form. So if they react simply by endorsement and then say that we're going to launch another initiative consistent with this, in which Powell goes out and makes an other swing around the area, and then we come up with a suggestion about a next step, and which of the recommendations are -- should be first -- see, they're not really prioritized, except violence stops. That's all the commission says. That's the highest priority -- stop the violence, on both sides.

But all the other recommendations are basically the same weight, almost. They do make the settlements -- they underscore the settlements issue.

MR. TELHAMI: And incitement. And incitement.

MR. LEWIS: And incitement.

I think that there will inevitably -- despite the reluctance of the administration to get more publicly involved, I think the Mitchell report makes it impossible for them to avoid it. And it isn't just the violence; it's the point I made earlier that this has too much standing internationally to be ignored.

But I'm not optimistic that it's going to be an initiative which in any short term is going to get very far. Some activity is probably better than none, though, at this point, because some people do need to see a slight glimmer of hope in order to hold back and not throw the grenade.

MR. SMERLING: Okay. Let's throw it open here. I've got Raffi (sp) and then Matt.

Q Yeah. My question is addressed to Sam and to Shibley. I'm mystified by the sudden prominence of this whole settlement issue when in fact on the ground there's been a dramatic decrease in settlement activity. And today nobody's moving into settlements and there's almost no construction. And the only tender that has been issued by the government is for those 700 units in Alfei Menashe and Maale Adumin. (Inaudible) -- tender, because they still have to get the contractors who will bid on that, but they're not going to do it, because nobody's moving in there.

So why is it suddenly so important when before Barak did much more, Rabin did much more, all the others did much more, and it was not such a big issue?

MR. TELHAMI: Well, Raffi (sp), I think if you look actually -- if you follow Palestinian politics, the settlement issue has always been at the top of the issues. It's been the sore point. It's kind of the symbolism of what Israel can do because of power that erodes, you know, future possibilities. And so it's a psychological issue as well as a real issue, because, you know, everything that happens on the ground, you know, is representative of the whole, you know, decades of occupation.

So -- now whether it's now up in prominence here in the debate -- that's because of the report -- I don't think it has ever gone out of prominence in the Palestinian areas.

And actually, all of -- prior to this report, I've been involved really since September with several second-track issues, you know, with Israelis and Palestinians, some of them are confidential. They're always ongoing, and there are some now. The contacts are ongoing at the non-official level.

And every single time the Palestinians raise that one issue, first and foremost, you know, as the single issue of symbolism, of signalling intentions, in part because of the psychology. The fear is that if you -- that Israel has the upper hand to interpret agreements, Israel has the upper hand to buy time. And if you enter into a negotiation without knowing where they're going lead, and you don't yet have a framework,

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then through settlement activity you have the capacity to change reality, to make it impossible to have certain outcomes that they think are necessary for them. So it's a significant symbolic issue. It's a psychological issue.

And short of -- to the extent that Arafat himself isn't going to be able to go to the Palestinians when he says, "Look, stop it," and he's going to enforce it and carry on with Hamas and other groups, to the extent that he's not going to be able to say -- because Sharon is willing to accept to give whatever, because Sharon is going to stick to his, probably, opening position of 42 percent of the land, what is he going to say?

And this is the minimum that he can use to say that, you know, that there are not likely to be changes until -- and so that's -- I read it as a psychological issue and as a real one, obviously, you know, the situation on the ground. When you say, "only this" and "only that," you know, even if it affects one farmer, people feel it. So I do think it's a real issue.

I think the report read correctly the sentiment on the ground. I think the debate here hasn't read it correctly. And I think we really are going to have to start listening a little bit more carefully because we haven't. I mean, the truth of the matter is, we've not paid enough attention to what's happening on the ground. These guys went out there and put their ear to the ground and they heard what's happening and I think they're reporting it. I don't think they elevated it; I think they reported it, they understood it correctly, because it is my own assessment as a scholar, you know, to look at it and say that's the way I read it.

MR. SMERLING: Okay, Matt and then -- (name inaudible). Please identify yourselves and your affiliation, everybody.

That was Rafi Danzier (ph) from AIPAC.

Q Matt Berger (sp) with (GATA ?). Ambassador, something that you said caught my attention. The idea that the parties in the Middle East sort of weighed U.S. involvement by the personal participation of the president. I wonder what do you think it would take to get President Bush personally involved? What would have to happen on the ground to get President Bush involved? Or do the players on the ground need to adapt to a U.S. policy being led by the secretary of State, and how long do you think that would take?

MR. LEWIS: That's a very good question. I don't think -- I can't predict what it would take to get George Bush personally involved. I don't know George Bush.

I do think it's possible, as happened in the Nixon years, for the secretary of State to be invested by the president with such public authority that everybody understands that he can get a letter from Nixon over night to Brezhnev to back up what he has just told Brezhnev, if he needs it. And Nixon would make enough public statements on the subject, but not a whole lot, on whatever subject, to reinforce the Kissinger mantra. Now, I think that could happen over time with Colin Powell, but it ain't happened yet, and it will take quite a while because we now have several presidents who didn't do that and who allowed themselves to become identified as the ultimate decision-maker on lots of tiny issues, which undermines your ability to operate as a secretary. But it's possible, but it will take quite a while to recondition the leaders.

It isn't that Bush needs to go out to the area. In fact, I think that would be a disaster, frankly. What he needs to do is so publicly invest him with his aura that people begin to take it seriously, and I think that could be done.

MR. SMERLING: Hassan.

Q Hassan Abdel Rahman. This goes to David, or somebody -- (inaudible.) What are the cause for the failure of negotiations so far with Israel? It is the fact that Israel, the Israeli leaders, leaders of the Israeli governmentk, tends to negotiate with itself and not with the Palestinians. (Mild laughter.) In other words,



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at Camp David, Mr. Barak was not negotiating with the Palestinians; he was negotiating with the rest of the Israeli -- (inaudible).

So when we are told that Barak made a much better offer to the Palestinians, they are measured against Sharon, Netanyahu, and the people who -- (inaudible) -- maybe Golda Meir, who at some point decided the Palestinians would not exist -- so that they never looked to see what is the minimum acceptable to the Palestinians. And so when Barak says, We'll give you 89 percent, or 91 percent of the West Bank, they think of the 91 percent, but they don't think of how the Palestinians view the other 9 percent that Israel is going to swallow. So that's why it is what -- (inaudible) -- talking about what is possible; it's what's possible for Mr. Sharon, but it is not what is acceptable to the Palestinians. And therefore, when the Palestinians say no to 91 percent and, by the way, we never accept it if we'd -- (inaudible) -- settlements.

I want you to realize one thing. The Palestinians feel that they have been under military occupation for so long -- (inaudible). This is part of the longest military occupation in recent history. And therefore, they want to be free. I mean, if you asked anybody -- (inaudible) -- today, "What do you want?" he will not tell you that, "I want to end the settlements." No. The Palestinians want an end to Israeli occupation. (Inaudible) -- Barak -- (inaudible) -- an Israeli government settlement, I think -- (inaudible) -- seven years, because they were thinking that it was in -- (inaudible). We are coming to an end of occupation. This is "we," the Palestinian Authority and -- (inaudible) -- Palestinians -- (inaudible) -- listen, at the end, by 1999, there will be an end to occupation, the Israeli military government will withdraw and you will be free and you would have an independent Palestinian state.

What happened? We did not achieve that. So today to come and dissect the problem and say, "Well, you know, there are settlements that are acceptable and others that are not acceptable," is not going to fly with the Palestinians because it is not the buildings themselves that provoke the Palestinians, it is really the presence of the settlers that provoke the Palestinians.

So therefore, if we do not have vertical settlement activities, also horizontal settlement -- verticals aren't going to be accepted.

When you speak about incitement, do you really read the Israeli press? Have you seen how much incitement there is in the Israeli press against the Palestinians, not only by journalists and by commentators, but also by public officials who -- I was on CNN two days ago with Mr. (Gitan ?) in which he said that the Palestinians are somehow sub-human beings. So when you -- and they are different from us; they do not respect human life like we do. (Inaudible) -- I did not hear an outrage here by you or by anybody else criticizing what those guys say about the Palestinians.

So there is incitement on both sides. When it comes to violence, you should realize that from a Palestinian point of view --

MR. SMERLING: Hassan, we need to get to the question here.

Q Yes, well from the Palestinian point of view, yes, there is one Palestinian who commits suicide, killing five Israelis, and that's absolutely unacceptable. But when the Israel government today orders F-16s to fly and bombard the city of Ramallah and Nablus, this is for all the Palestinians to see, this is an act sponsored by the Israeli government, not by -- (name inaudible) -- or by any other Palestinian who represents himself or maybe a small group.

So when we have terrorism on our side, it may be an individual or a group who sponsors terrorism. But when Israel engages in terrorism against the Palestinians, it is state-sponsored terrorism. And that's why, in this context, you have to understand Palestinian public opinion.

MR. MAKOVSKY: All right can I respond? (Chuckles.)

MR. SMERLING: Yeah, sure.

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MR. MAKOVSKY: All right. He said a lot. I'd like to say this, and I'm actually very happy I got this question because some of the remarks that I want to say in the presentation, and I felt that I didn't have time for, this enables me to get at it.

I think many people know, in my view, and I don't think the Mitchell Report changes this one bit, and I will accept the Mitchell findings and what he said, that there was no deliberate strategy by the Palestinian leadership to start the intifada, despite what Mr. Falouji said in the Palestinian Cabinet, but okay.

My point is that no one, I think, is blaming Yasser Arafat that he didn't accept what Ehud Barak offered. I think -- and I've still yet to hear an answer to this -- the anger at Arafat is that he didn't counter offer at the table, but the counter offer was in the streets. And --

Q (Off mike.)

MR. MAKOVSKY: Let me -- I didn't -- Hassan, I didn't interrupt you. Just let me -- bear me out.

I think what should have happened, and this gets back to my theme of leadership, is that there had to be -- after this thing started under a terrible situation with the violence -- saying we're in a very delicate negotiation now, we have to go back to the table, stop everything -- I'm not saying that he instigated -- but stop things now because we need to return to the table; this is our counter offer, and we need to finalize this negotiation.

That, in my view, is the key thing. And I see it, frankly, as that what has to happen here is that -- when I say the link between the environment and the negotiations, that each side can broaden the political space of the other or he can narrow the political space of the other. And to me, the cardinal sin is that we've gotten away from land for peace. That had a balance; two wings of an aircraft. And at some point, it became land for facts -- give us 100 percent and we'll send you a receipt.

And I think part of it is because what Hassan just said here, I see as proving my point. He said what the Palestinians want is to be free, they want to end the occupation. A, that's what these negotiations were about; and B, I think, frankly, the Palestinians seem to me focusing on what they consider justice. I think Israel has its justice. But I think if -- each side will not get its -- the Palestinians won't get their justice till Israel gets its justice or its peace, and each claim is embedded in the other. One side will not end the occupation without giving Israel its peace, and Israel won't get its peace while there's an occupation. And to me, those things are linked.

And ultimately, we've got to get back to land for peace. That was the idea. I think even in Oslo we made a mistake, people said, well, end the occupation and then we'll see. There had to be some sort of a -- I don't know if I can use the word "reciprocity" without it being misinterpreted here, but there needed to be some balance between these two concepts.

It started out that way. As we got on and on, we lost it. It became land for nothing.

And I would argue that if I had one point that I'd like this audience with, it's this point. It's this: It's to realize the uniqueness of this Palestinian issue as being different from Egypt, the Egypt peace, the Jordan peace, the Syria peace, the Lebanon peace. With Egypt, you made an agreement, the foreign minister of Egypt. You draw a line in the sand. The agreement is the end. You never see each other again. You go 100 miles that way; you go 100 miles that way. That's it, it's over.

With the Palestinians, because it's too much history, too little geography, it's a totally different peace. This is a mingling peace. It's not the peace where you'll never see each other. You want to share workers. You want to share Jerusalem. You want to share water. You want to share infrastructure. It's a fundamentally different sort of peace. And therefore, the quality of that relationship is crucial. It can't just be 242, give it to me and then everything will be great; you're a military superior, come on, that's the only thing that counts. If you don't want to share Jerusalem and everything else, there's got to be a sense that people will be safer rather than more vulnerable after that territory is given.

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And I think we're going to end up with the Clinton plan, frankly, in some variation thereof. The question is, now, how do we get there. And in writing the second book now about what went wrong, you know, at Oslo, part of it was the ambiguity in the beginning of the process. We can get all into that. I don't want to get off track. But now maybe that's the endgame that we could aspire to. But there has to be a return to this idea.

And I know Hassan won't agree with me, and I still consider him a friend, whether I say so publicly or not, but I think that in this land-for-peace equation, Yasser Arafat has done a miserable job in convincing Israelis that if they got 100 percent, 100 percent of the land, Israel would get the peace that is every bit as tangible as the land they're yielding. And I feel sorry to say this, but I think perhaps not in his lifetime will this happen. He's not Mandela. He's not Rabin. It's the curse of the Palestinians, it's the curse of Israelis, because they live next to each other, and geography won't change that.

MR. SMERLING: Okay. We have about 20 minutes left and we have a number of questions here. So I'm going to make a request that you don't have to disguise your statement as question -- I know nobody has opinions about settlements or violence -- (laughter) -- or U.S. policy -- but I'm going to insist that you keep it brief so the others have a chance. Starting with Mr. Abdel Rahman (sp) from Egypt and then over to Ken Stein (sp).

Q All right. I would like just to share with you a few other reasons why -- (word inaudible) -- settlements is important from a practical point of view, for the negotiators, when they come back to the negotiating table. And we remember that in Camp David, that afterward, one of the stumbling blocks were how to deal with those -- (off mike). And actually, whether they're 1.7 percent or 3 percent or 5 percent, actually the difference was not that big when deciding on the borders, on the final borders. So they themselves, the settlements themselves, in their present size is already a stumbling block. We should not really increase that, from a practical point.

Also, coming back to the negotiating table, even in drafting the Jordanian and Egyptian proposal, we didn't see much on the part of the government of Sharon (they can do ?) beyond freezing the settlements. We need to remember that we are now talking about going back to the borders of 29th of September 2000, not to the 1967 borders, not to the 1948 borders; we are just creating the situation for negotiations to resume, we are not settling this issue.

And I agree with Ambassador Lewis that we need some kind of a mechanism, not just endorsing the report or its recommendations. I'm sure that our colleagues in the State Department (will find ?) and want language to endorse the report with its recommendations without going into details. But how do you proceed further? And that's my question to the three panelists.

If the U.S., according to you, is not going to be that involved in moving this as a mechanism, as a launching pad, as Secretary Powell put it, to move the parties back to the negotiations, monitor the implementation, make sure that the parties will commit to what they are all agreed to, and then, finally, help with the negotiations; if that's not the case -- and that's what actually you presented us with -- so who's going to do that? Who is going to -- Ambassador Lewis hinted that we are -- Arabs didn't come up with very good ideas in the last few years, because of a simple reason, Egyptians are always full of good ideas, but we whisper -- we used to whisper them in the U.S. ears, that the broker, and they would follow up on it. But now we need to go out and try to implement them. Who is going to do this U.S. role if the U.S. is not doing it?

And the second part of the question is, what if the U.S. is not going to do it? I haven't seen you talking about the ramifications for the whole region. You only talked about the Palestinian-Israeli situation as if it is secluded. What about what David alluded to, about the reaction in the whole Arab world, Arab countries, with the satellite showing what's going on there. What would happen to the U.S. interests in that part of the world?

MR. SMERLING: By the way, I think we have Al Jazeera here today, so your comments may be broadcast.

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Go ahead, Sam. You want to take a shot?

MR. LEWIS: Yeah. Well, I think actually they will make a show of taking initiative. In fact, Powell has already said we're going to use this as a launching pad. The issue really isn't so much whether they will not do anything at all, I'm sure they will; it's likely to be more how much, as I put, muscle is put behind it.

It seems to me that the situation requires more than just Americans at this stage. I don't happen to be a unilateralist about the peace process. And a report of this nature, with several major players in it, it seems to me that there ought to be some continuing role for that commission to take stock periodically, with American leadership. I think the Americans have to take a leadership role. What's unlikely to happen, in my mind, is a lot of very heavy leaning on the Sharon government. I can imagine -- (short audio break) -- and eventually I'm sure he's going to have to have somebody like Dennis Ross to help him because he's got to worry about China and Russia and a few other odds and ends periodically. But let's assume he will be the front person, and would think that Egypt and Jordan would have to also be more prominent and less whispering in the ear, though it's certainly clear that Egypt, in particular, and President Mubarak has been a very important player from time to time, and especially because he seems to be the only one that Arafat occasionally will listen to.

MR. TELHAMI: And let me just add to this a couple of things.

I think that the administration fear, obviously, is failure. That is their big fear, and especially given that things blew up in Clinton's face. And, you know, one can say their first three months in office have been really just a anti-Clinton policy. Right now that's the fear that they have. But this doesn't mean that they can't try to work to implement the report and work with the parties. I think the public profile that they would take probably would be not to tie them in a way that would cost them politically if they did not fail, that to see that some of the responsibility is laid on the parties. And they would engage in active diplomacy, but they would frame it in a way that would give them, you know, some possible political way out.

But I think that ultimately it's really going to -- the role itself is going to be determined by events on the ground.

Frankly, what alternatives does the Sharon government have? I mean, it has to engage. There will be something that the U.S. is planning on supporting, even if it's not actively engaging in. What are they going to put on the table that is going to be acceptable to the international community? They don't have a unilateral solution. Mr. Arafat doesn't have a unilateral solution. They can, you know, bleed each other for many years to come and make things worse as they do because, you know, it's a cycle; we all know what it gets.

So there is no unilateral solution, and the more bloodshed the more pressure from -- at home to do something about it and the more pressure from, as you pointed out, from the region itself and beyond the region to do something about it. And clearly it's linked to other issues of American foreign policy. And so, A, there will be tremendous pressure on the administration to keep engaged, and B, what are they going to discuss other than what's already been put on the table unless they want to put some new ideas that are exclusively their own, which is much more dangerous to them? This is at least something that they have a distance from.

And so, therefore, in fact this will end up being, by default, the -- you know, the ideas that will be discussed. It might not be immediate, it might not be -- so I don't think that therefore they should take a heavy handed approach at the -- right up front and say, "Here is one that we've got to implement." They should carry on with diplomacy, allow that distance a little bit to help them rather than hurt them, knowing that events are going to ultimately bring it back to the forefront. I think that's the right approach to take.

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MR. MAKOVSKY: Thank you. I think that's right and I think, you know, again, benign neglect, which could spill over regionally, I think is dangerous for all parties. And that's why I think we need to be as pragmatic as possible in looking at this and do what we can do to stop this descent into communal war.

I will just say on Egypt -- and I listened very carefully to what President Mubarak said on the Charlie Rose interview that he did when he was here last month, and it confirmed to me what I've -- over time now believe that he's not going to influence Yasser Arafat. He said, "Anything I would tell him to do he will then immediately say, 'Mubarak made me do it' and that will hurt me with public opinion." So I believe the president and I don't think he's going to do it.

And (Ovadia ?) Yosef, by the way -- I'm sorry, I don't want to get back to it -- but I condemned this in the past. The people here haven't heard me; I will say it again. And he himself tried to qualify what he said, but I think it just should be condemned outright. He said he was referring to terrorists per se and not the Palestinian people. And he made that -- but I think that anything that could be interpreted as if to say anything like that I just think it's outrageous. And, you know, I've said this before, so for those who haven't heard it from me, I'll say it again.

MR. SMERLING: Okay. (Inaudible) -- did Sharon also condemn him? Do you know?

MR. : Yes.

MR. MAKOVSKY: What, Ovadah Yosef (sp)?

MR. SMERLING: Yeah, I just -- I don't --

MR. MAKOVSKY: I'm not aware, but -- I think he did, but --

Q He did condemn what he said about Peres. (Laughter.)

MR. SMERLING: No, he wouldn't.

Ken Stein, who we're honored to have up from Emory today.

Q Thank you. If I can take a second, historically, there have been three times when there have been Palestinian, Zionist, or Jewish violence; three times that there's been a report written: 129, 136-39, and one now. And the difference between the first two is, there was no mechanism of enforcement to apply to recommendations that either the Shaw report or the Peel report issued. Sam is right; you have to have a mechanism of enforcement for this to make a difference.

It appears to me that incrementalism is the only thing that's going to work, okay? We'll still recuperating from the inability to reach a comprehensive peace in a comprehensive way, which was in fact what the effort was last July. So we go back to the step-by-step, phased interim kinds of things.

And my suggestion is that you do exactly as Sam says, and that is to reconstitute this commission, in terms of its principles, in an implementation committee, and that is to take it one step further. And step one might be you have the Palestinian-Israeli underlings, not the top folks, but meeting with Powell or someone Powell designates, to agree on, I think, what Shibley or David called the stabilization package, which -- I think those were your terms.

MR. : Right.

Q And then what you do is you agree to end any violence and agree to temporarily halt settlements. And it seems to me that's what the essence of the Mitchell report is -- stop the violence and halt the settlements. And you can't guarantee that there won't be someone from some Israeli settlement who's going to, you know, open up, in an ad hoc sort of fashion, a settlement tomorrow morning, or some person isn't going to throw a bomb, another bomb, in Dizengoff Center. So the respective sides are going to have to accept the reality that either they try and push the process forward or they become captives of the street.

If you become captives of the street in Arab-Israeli negotiations, you get nothing done. We know that historically.



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MR. : That's right.

Q And even though the street and the ground may determine where you go, you can't let it lead you; you have to lead it. And if you don't lead it, it will bite you, and it will bite you hard, and it will bite you continuously. There is absolutely no doubt about it historically.

I would suggest that you have this implementation committee do something of the following: try and re-engage in security cooperation, try and do things on release of the closure, try and talk about the third withdrawal from Wye.

There are all sorts of things out there still on the table that can be done, even though you're not moving ahead of where you were last July, you're certainly being able to prevent sliding back, which I think is that Shibley said, let's not slide back.

And then you create a three-month schedule from there on out. And hopefully the environment changes, David. Hopefully you reduce the incitement. Hopefully you get people -- you're not going to get (LIM ?), you're not going to get El-Akrom (ph) Weekly, you're not going to get Hozto'fe (ph), to all of a sudden stop writing nasty things about the other side. I mean, it's abysmal what they write, absolutely abysmal! These people should be, you know, put in the Seychelles and left there forever.

Q Together.

Q Huh?

Q Together!

Q Absolutely! (Laughter.) (Off mike.)

MR. LEWIS (?): It's too nice a place! (More laughter.)

Q I think what this does is then creates the platform for if the U.S. administration wants to get deeper involved, then it gets a chance to see where you are in September and October, November. It's very difficult for me to believe this administration is going to do anything else than domestic things, because he's going to have a tougher time after the 2002 election. He's going to lose portions of the Senate, he's going to lose portions of the House, and then where is his domestic agenda? Maybe that's the only time he turns internationally -- or turns toward foreign policy because he can't get anything done at home.

MR. SMERLING: Ken, I just wish you could be here more often so I wouldn't have to be our resident historian.

I want to ask actually both of you something, just to finish on this piece before we adjourn, which is, there's one aspect of reconstituting the commission, an aspect of the commission itself that hasn't been mentioned, it's that this administration was correctly, I think, described as concerned about being not Clinton, fear of failure and credibility. But this commission was a Clinton creation. It's led by, as you mentioned yesterday, a prominent Democrat who was fiercely partisan when he was the majority leader. Why would this administration want to empower a Clinton carryover led by a prominent Democrat?

MR. LEWIS (?): Well, you could spread the blame. (Laughter.)

MR. : You can add another American.

MR. TELHAMI (?): And you do have Warren Rudman. I mean, don't forget, it's a bipartisan --

MR. SMERLING (?): But he's not a great party leader.

MR. : No, no. I don't think he's too popular on the majority side in Congress these days.

Q Could I ask this question?

MR. SMERLING: I probably couldn't stop you, Bookie (sp). (Laughter.) Go ahead.

(Cross talk.)

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MR. SMERLING: We also -- we've had others waiting.

If people want to go a little over, that's okay.

Q (Inaudible.) I disapprove of almost every column that Krauthammer or Safire has written recently. I don't agree with them. But they make a credible case, a credible case that the real intent of the Arabs continues to be the liquidation of Israel, and we know there are answers to that. What, if anything, can the Arab leaders, Palestinian leaders, do or say now to clear the air of that?

MR. MAKOVSKY: I could say very specifically what I think needs to be done. I don't, you know, think it's rocket science. I agree with Ken that you don't let the street leave you; you have to leave the street, and I would say three things right off the bat. Put forward a vision of reconciliation, not as peace-for-peace, okay -- so in case someone wants to respond -- but land-for-peace; that yes, we want our land, we believe it's ours, we think the occupation should end, but once this occupation ends, this is the sort of relationship we want to have with the people of Israel, with the government of Israel; talk about the educational systems working together, and we could go on and on and on.

There are some very specific things that could be done that could put people's minds at ease that the intentions are not just to create a new baseline for violence and vulnerability, and I don't think it's rocket science, and I think it should be done, and I believe a lot of Palestinians around the leadership understand this, but unfortunately, the person at the top either doesn't or doesn't want to.

MR. TELHAMI: Can I just add a little bit to this, because I think that, you know, when you say "Arabs," the idea that there is a unified, singular Arab position that has behaved consistently over the past couple of decades is really, you know, certainly not borne by facts and anybody who wants to see a unified position in that regard must be blind to the facts.

But there is an aspect of it that also is shared on the Arab side. There is also a widespread, you know, kind of a perception in the Arab world that doesn't believe that Israel would ever accept the Palestinians, that it's -- you know, despite all of what happened at Camp David, they read it differently. They read it as just an attempt to subjugate. You have that mutual.

Ultimately, I think, the real issue isn't so much -- although this is important psychologically -- Israel, when it signs a peace treaty and the Palestinians, when they sign a peace treaty, they're not going to rely simply on perceptions and persuasion. They're going to have real security guarantees that are going to be objectively verified, that are going to be independent from whatever else that you need. That's number one.

And the number two, and there is no -- there is no replacement of that. I mean, you can't replace it. This is going to have to be a cornerstone of any agreement. Number two, in our experience of the past couple of decades of Arab-Israeli peacemaking, it is obvious that there is a problem and the problem is there has not been enough work on the people-to-people peace; there has not been work on what one can call a changing of the culture to a peacemaking culture; and a lot more effort has to go into it.

I think there is too much incitement, on both sides.

I think that has to be addressed. I think not enough has been tackled in the peace agreements. It has to be a supplement to every political agreement signed by parties. And it's a genuine thing that has to be taken into account. But I don't think in and of itself this assumption should be a barrier to concluding agreements.

MR. SMERLING: Bookie (ph), your question, the responses inspire me to think that we should devote an entire session just to this question of -- it encompasses incitement and perceptions and public opinion -- because I think there's universal agreement among the Clinton peace team, the people actually involved, that this area was neglected when they were driving for an agreement, and that has to be corrected.

I know there are a couple of you waiting with questions. If you want to stay after, maybe our speakers will stay for a couple minutes. But I want to let the rest of you go.



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Thank you for joining us. And I look forward to seeing you again. (Applause.)

END

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GUESTS: Terje Roed-Larsen, Hassan Abdel Rahman

BYLINE: Marina Kolbe, Fionnuala Sweeney

HIGHLIGHT:

The Intifada and its human cost. Beyond the lives lost in the Palestinian uprising, another factor is threatening the fledgling state. The economy, so dependent on Israel, is quickly running out of air.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

MARINA KOLBE, INSIGHT (voice-over): The Intifada and its human cost. Beyond the lives lost in the Palestinian uprising, another factor is threatening the fledgling state. The economy, so dependent on Israel, is quickly running out of air.

(on camera): Hello, and welcome to INSIGHT. I'm Marina Kolbe, in for Jonathan Mann.

United Nations special coordinator for the Middle East, Terje Roed-Larsen, studied the economic fallout of the Intifada. The UN report came out this past weekend. It makes grim reading, saying a third of all Palestinians live in poverty - a 50 percent increase in the past six months alone. They earn less than two dollars a day.

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And the total loss to the economy, excluding damage to property and the cost of treating injured Palestinians, exceeds \$1 billion. So how are ordinary Palestinians dealing with their misfortunes. Fionnuala Sweeney begins our coverage with this report from Gaza.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

FIONNUALA SWEENEY, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Nahama Namus (ph) lives with 15 members of her family in Khan Younis refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. Suddenly, shots ring out. The family takes cover.

NAHAMA NAMUS (through translator): We can't do anything. We can't sit in our homes. We can't sleep. This is not a life.

SWEENEY: "I'm scared. I'm scared," says her granddaughter, 9-year-old, Asma (ph). "I want peace. I want to live a normal life like the Israelis."

Gun battles here are a daily fact of life. Surrounded by three Jewish settlements, the camp is home to more than 57,000 Palestinian refugees. Israeli soldiers in tanks and bunkers are all that separate the Palestinians from the settlers.

For many Palestinians in the squalor of the camp, the long-held dream of realizing their own state and improving their daily lives seems almost unattainable.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE (through translator): There is nothing to lose. I am depressed. I want to blow myself up. I only keep going because of my children and my parents.

IYAD SARRAJ, PSYCHIATRIST: The feeling today, the feeling of community despair, loss of hope, tension, apprehension, heightened anxiety almost to the extent of terror, people are frightened of the future.

SWEENEY: More than seven years after the Oslo agreement with Israel, few Palestinians are seeing the benefits of peace, and some here are beginning to question the role of the Palestinian Authority.

The residents of Khan Younis say Yasser Arafat and the authority are weak, but most don't blame him. Arafat, they say, is a victim of the situation as much as his people. But there are signs of growing dissent.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE (through translator): The negotiations have brought nothing. But the people in the authority are afraid to lose their privileges.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE (through translator): The authority is not providing us with protection. If not, they should move aside and let others act.

SWEENEY: In a show of strength, armed men from the military wing of Yasser Arafat's Fatah political movement walk the streets, wearing masks to conceal their identities from the camera. Prior to their attacks against Israel, they argue theirs is a legitimate resistance against occupation.

Displaying photographs of their former leader assassinated, they say, by the Israelis, the men want the Palestinian Authority to re-evaluate its position on the peace process with Israel.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE (through translator): If the Palestinian Authority cannot stop the Israeli aggression by negotiations, then they should use weapons.

SWEENEY: These men see no contradiction in their support for an armed struggle against Israel and their allegiance to Yasser Arafat. But they reject the Palestinian Authority's condemnation of violent attacks.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE (through translator): We have different outlooks on how to achieve our independence, but we will not use our guns against the authority. But if the Palestinian Authority went with the popular view, it would be much stronger. If it succumbs to Israeli and international pressure, it will lose.

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MUHAMMAD DAHLAN, PALESTINIAN SECURITY (through translator): The Israeli behavior weakens the Palestinian Authority. This will gradually lead the whole region into chaos, and Israel will pay the highest price. The guns will not be turned against the authority.

SWEENEY: As observers say, Arafat is walking a fine line between meeting the demands of his people and the international pressure to continue the peace process with his Israeli neighbors.

Fionnuala Sweeney, CNN, Gaza.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KOLBE: We pause for a short break. But in a moment, a closer look at the specifics. We see how the wheels of industry are slowing for the Palestinians.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KOLBE (voice-over): Grounded yet again. Israel shut down the Gaza International Airport last week after a Palestinian bus driver rammed his vehicle into a group of Israeli soldiers and civilians. This type of shutdown and border closures routinely follow violence in Israel.

(on camera): Welcome back.

Four months ago, Arab governments promised the Palestinians \$1 billion. Very little of that money has been delivered, and the few sectors of the Palestinian economy that were self-sustaining are now lying idle. Once again, here is Fionnuala Sweeney.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

SWEENEY (voice-over): This textile factory in Gaza is one of the few businesses still operating, but only at one-third of its capacity. And every time the Khani (ph) border crossing is closed by Israel, the factory closes, too.

Just five months ago, 26 companies - some of them internationally owned - were based in the Gaza industrial zone, employing nearly 900 people. Now, in the wake of the Intifada and the sporadic border closures, the zone is practically deserted. All international investors have frozen their activities, and what little cooperation there had been between Israeli and Palestinian companies is suspended.

The Israeli owners of this factory, unable to cross the border into Gaza to oversee production, moved out just days ago, relocating their business in Israel. The Palestinian owner of this tire retreading plant invested more than \$1 million here. Now his business is close to collapse.

Before the Intifada, he says he had been making in-roads into the Israeli market.

JABR NABAHIN, FACTORY OWNER: The Palestinian and the Israeli business community are having common interest. The agenda of the political and military in Israel seems to have a different agenda or different priorities of this agenda.

SWEENEY: The Israeli government has consistently said the border closures will end once the violence ends.

EPHRAIM SNEH, ISRAEL DEP. DEFENSE MINISTER: Only the purpose of this closure to make it more difficult for armed people, the terrorists to drive along the road and to fight Israel.

SWEENEY: In Gaza City, these high-rise buildings sprang up after the Oslo peace accords of 1993. But almost eight years on, the Palestinian dream Gaza could one day be the Hong Kong of the Middle East lies in ruins, and according to the United Nations, things are getting worse.

(on camera): A recent UN report says that over the past five months, the Palestinian Authority has lost \$1.15 billion. That's more than \$8 million every single day. One-third of all Palestinians, it says, now lives below the poverty line.

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(voice-over): Unemployment has risen from 11 percent to 38 percent. The economy has lost about 20 percent of its projected annual GDP.

Rafat is a policeman employed by Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority, but the authority hasn't been able to pay his salary on time. With a wife and six children to support, he is finding it impossible to make ends meet.

"The siege imposed by the Israelis and this collective punishment will cause an explosion in the end," he says. "How long can the people take this - one month or two?"

TERJE ROED-LARSEN, UN REPRESENTATIVE If key Palestinian institutions, Palestinian Authority institutions collapse because of lack of funding, it will very easily enhance a situation which may be characterized by terrorists and anarchy.

SWEENEY: In severe financial straits and unable to provide for its people, the Palestinian Authority acknowledges its own legitimacy is at stake.

NABIL SHA'ATH, PALESTINIAN CABINET MINISTER: The seeds of really difficult times are there. If everything is closed, no support, no end of siege and no light at the end of the tunnel, expect the worst. You figure it out. Expect the worst.

SWEENEY: No longer concerned with long-term economic development, the authority is banking on a fast injection of international cash merely to stay solvent.

SHA'ATH: Between European support and Arab support, we might be given that breath of life so that we can at least be able to get over our difficulties.

SWEENEY: The Palestinian economy could soon be breathing its last, warns the UN, unless Israel lifts the closures and peace talks resume immediately. If not, the UN predicts the resulting instability could spread to the entire region.

Fionnuala Sweeney, CNN, Gaza.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KOLBE: We spoke at length with Terje Roed-Larsen, the UN Middle East envoy you saw in that report. He told us the situation is getting worse every day.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

ROED-LARSEN: The situation is very serious indeed on the ground in both Gaza and the West Bank. Unemployment have now been soaring up to 38 percent, and the number of people living below the poverty level - that is earning less than \$2.10 a day - is now well above 32 percent, which means that about one million people are living below the poverty level.

So these two figures, basic figures - the poverty level and unemployment - indicate how serious the situation is.

KOLBE: It is serious for the Palestinians. What kind of impact does it have on the Israeli economy?

ROED-LARSEN: Well, it doesn't have much impact on the Israeli economy. However, there is, on the Palestinian side, on a parallel basis, there is also a fiscal crisis, and it's with the amount of cash available through the Palestinian Authority now, it would have been impossible to pay wages for the public sector - nurses, doctors, teachers, et cetera, and the security forces.

They've been bailed out this month by a huge overdraft from a local bank. But for the next month, the Israelis are transferring Palestinian (inaudible) unless the donor community comes up with significant amounts, there will be no ability to pay salaries for next month.

So the effect is sort of double economic crisis. One is hitting generally living conditions, and the other one is undermining the ability for Palestinian institutions to function, which in turn, as I see it,

ISRAEL POLICY FORUM DISCUSSION TOPIC: THE MITCHELL REPORT PARTICIPANTS: SAMUEL LEWIS, FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO ISRAEL; DAVID MAKOVSKY, THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY; SHIBLEY TELHAMI, TH produces an even more volatile security situation. Because poverty and hunger fuel anger and resentment and builds extremism and fundamentalism.

KOLBE: But the Israelis for their part say that they're concerned about security. So how do you answer Israel's security concerns? You're, on the one hand, asking for them to lift the closure, but how do you answer their concerns?

ROED-LARSEN: Israel's security concerns are serious and legitimate. However, in my opinion, a closure policy which has resulted now in losses of about \$1 billion in GDP totally, about \$11 million every day we see in losses, produce - as I see it, as I've already said - a more volatile security situation. In other words, seen from an Israeli security point of view, the closure policy and the restriction on movement is counterproductive.

KOLBE: So you're saying they could see even further violence?

ROED-LARSEN: As I see it, the closure policy produces violence instead of reducing violence.

KOLBE: Now you're visiting Washington Tuesday and Wednesday. What are your goals during that trip?

ROED-LARSEN: I will discuss with my American counterparts the general political situation in the region, but also specifically the living conditions issues we've been talking about now and also the fiscal crisis. In a way, we are facing in the Middle East now multiple crises. We have political crisis, there is a security crisis, there is a fiscal crisis, and there is a crisis related to the living standard of ordinary people.

KOLBE: So what solutions are you proposing to get past the mistrust?

ROED-LARSEN: I think there is - it's necessary to throw a lifeline to the Palestinian Authority, and this has to be done in such a way that the Israelis will have to transfer about U.S. \$50 million of that which they owe to the Palestinians. Further, the international community will have to come up with additional money in budgetary support to help them over the immediate crisis.

But the most important thing is that the policy of closures has to be eased immediately and as far as possible also to be removed in order to open up the economy again. Because it's not sustainable the way it is right now.

KOLBE: So how do you propose encouraging, persuading the Israeli government to throw that lifeline to the Palestinians?

ROED-LARSEN: Both the secretary-general of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, and myself have repeatedly raised the issue with our Israeli counterparts, both with Prime Minister Barak and with Prime Minister-elect Sharon. And we do hope that they shortly will make decisions in order to both transfer the debt (ph) and also in order to lift the economic restrictions.

KOLBE: What about the international community? I understand you're also going to be heading to Europe, trying to raise \$55 million there.

ROED-LARSEN: I am traveling to a series of European capitals. I will also go to visit Oslo because Norway holds the chair of the donor community, and I will discuss ways of helping out the Palestinians in this very difficult period. If we're not able to do it, I'm afraid that the consequences will be that we may move into a situation of chaos and anarchy, which could also have spillovers in the region and make also the general security situation in the region more difficult.

KOLBE: Given that the Palestinian Authority has been accused of corruption and spending on unnecessary things, how would you garner support for more Palestinian aid?

ROED-LARSEN: We have very forcefully raised with the Palestinian Authority that there has to be proper accountability and transparency for all economic transactions, and we are continuing to raise this issue, as I said, forcefully. And of course, if there are such rules of the game of transparency and accountability, it will make it much easier for donors to come up with monies.

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Everybody has to deliver something here. The international community, the Palestinian Authority and the government of Israel.

KOLBE: Terje Roed-Larsen, we thank you for your insights.

ROED-LARSEN: Thank you very much.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KOLBE: We'll talk more about the Palestinian economy and diplomacy when INSIGHT returns. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KOLBE (voice-over): Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat met with the United States consul general Monday. The Palestinian leader asked for Washington's help in getting the Israeli blockade lifted. On the same day, a high-level Palestinian delegation was heading to the United States for meetings with U.S. officials.

A new government in Israel and a new administration in Washington, all parties in the Middle East realize it's a new equation for the peace process. Last week, a top Israeli delegation was in Washington meeting with officials of the Bush administration. And United States Secretary of State Colin Powell is preparing for his own visit to the Mideast.

Can trust be rebuilt, and what role does Washington have in helping the Palestinians?

(on camera): Hassan Abdel Rahman is the Palestinian Authority's representative in Washington. Thank you for joining us.

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REP. TO U.S.: Thank you.

KOLBE: What was your reaction to the UN report?

ABDEL RAHMAN: Well, I'm aware of the details of this report. Israel, for the last five months, has imposed a policy of closure, encirclement, isolation of Palestinian towns and villages which led to the situation that was described by the special envoy Mr. Larsen to you and by the people of Gaza.

The situation is really a very dangerous situation, and the repercussions are very serious, not only on the Palestinian-Israeli track, but I believe to the whole region. Because if Israel is really interested in creating confidence in the possibility of living together, establishing peace, the Palestinian people feel that those policies are a form of collective punishment that are intended to starve and isolate the Palestinian people.

And therefore, the action is bound to be the opposite of what is intended.

KOLBE: The Israelis for their part, however, say that they're imposing these restrictions because of their security concerns. And Mr. Roed-Larsen, which we heard earlier, said everyone has to deliver something, including the Palestinians. So what are the Palestinians prepared to deliver to help quell the Israeli security concerns?

ABDEL RAHMAN: I believe that no doubt Israel has legitimate security needs, but those security needs should not be at the expense of the whole Palestinian population. Look at the isolated incident where a bus driver who wasn't cleared by the Israelis was involved in the incident where eight Israelis were killed.

The result was that Israel imposed a closure on three million Palestinians. I want to see what is the connection between an isolated incident by an individual with a policy of the Israeli government to starve three million people? I mean, there is no connection, and there is no parity.

KOLBE: What about if some Israelis would argue that dialogue so far has not worked, extremist Palestinians are still creating greater security concerns for them, and they're trying to put some diplomatic pressure on Palestine? What is your reaction to that and their argument there?



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ABDEL RAHMAN: You know, Israel has occupied the Palestinian territories for the last 32 (ph) years. It has used all kinds of repressive measures against the Palestinian population before the Palestinian Authority came together in the West Bank and after. Therefore, this policy of force by the Israelis is counterproductive.

Remember that the seven years of peace-making between us and the Israelis were the quietest. When there is hope for the Palestinian people to be free from Israel, they have an incentive to stay quiet. But when Israel shuts down that hope, when Israel closes down the possibility of Palestinian people becoming free from Israeli occupation, then that's when the Palestinians become angry.

We tell the Israelis that you want to end the violence, it's simple. Withdraw your tanks from the West Bank and Gaza, and I assure you that there will not be violence because violence now or protests are directed against the presence of Israeli army in the Palestinian territory. They are directed against Israeli settlers stealing Palestinian land and building Jewish settlement at the expense of the Palestinian people. So.

KOLBE: OK, quickly, we're running out of time. I want to ask you a question about the declining popularity of Mr. Yasser Arafat. How is that going to affect his ability to negotiate?

ABDEL RAHMAN: Well, I believe that this is temporary and it is limited. The Palestinian people are going through desperate times. The Palestinian people are feeling the pressure from all sides, and therefore, if you notice, they are calling on Yasser Arafat to tell him stop negotiating with Israel under the present conditions.

So if the Israelis make it possible for us to negotiate by lifting those repressive measures against the Palestinian people, then I believe the situation will change.

KOLBE: Hassan Abdel Rahman, we thank you so much for joining us.

ABDEL RAHMAN: Thank you.

KOLBE: And that's INSIGHT for this day. I'm Marina Kolbe. Stay tuned. There's more news just ahead.

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BYLINE: BARRY SCHWEID

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BODY:

Renewed violence is at the top of the agenda and resumption of negotiations with Israel only a remote possibility Thursday as Yasser Arafat calls on President Clinton at the White House.

"We're now in a very difficult cycle," Clinton's assistant for national security, Sandy Berger, said before the meeting. "The president is focused on what he can do in the next few months to try to reduce the violence and resume a political process."

Rejecting any notion Clinton's influence has waned with his term running out, Berger said "the business of the presidency goes on."

Once-optimistic plans to mold a final settlement between Palestinian leader Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, who comes calling Sunday, are in disarray, shattered by their differences on Jerusalem and five weeks of violence on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and in Israel.

On Thursday, Israeli combat helicopters rocketed a pickup truck packed with Palestinian guerrillas on the West Bank, killing one and critical wounding another. The Israeli army said the assault implemented a new policy of targeting ringleaders.

Two passers-by were killed and 11 others were injured.

Berger declined to address the incident specifically, but said in a general way that "violence breeds violence and we must find a way to break this cycle. It's important for people on both sides to do all they can to try to achieve that."

Barak said Wednesday on Israeli television that he would seek no resumption of peace talks. "I go to Washington to ensure that the end of violence that was agreed on at Sharm el-Sheik is carried out, if that is possible. That is all," he said, referring to an Egyptian resort where Clinton mediated a truce last month.

"It's still the U.S.'s intention to work with the parties to help them try to achieve what they are in a position to achieve, what they want to achieve," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Wednesday before Arafat arrived a little after midnight.

Palestinian Commanders' Car Bombed Associated Press Online November 9, 2000; Thursday

Referring to the truce the leaders accepted under Clinton's prodding, Boucher said, "We think that first attention needs to be paid to implementing the commitments to Sharm el-Sheik, to reducing the violence, restoring the calm."

Arafat is requesting that the United Nations establish an international protective force to shield Palestinians from Israeli soldiers and police. Boucher said new U.N. resolutions are not the prescription for ending the unrest. Carrying out the emergency summit's accord is the best approach, he said.

The Arabs continued their diplomatic offensive against Israel, persuading Qatar to announce Thursday it would shut down an Israeli trade mission in Doha. Qatar did not say if it would officially sever relations with Israel, but relations have been based entirely on commerce.

Barak cautioned Wednesday at a memorial in Israel to slain Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin: "Violence will not achieve anything. It will not change our policy and will not weaken our determination to bring peace and security to Israel."

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has reprimanded Arafat for what she considers an inadequate followthrough on the truce. She is expected to meet separately with Arafat after he sees Clinton at the White House.

En route to Washington, Arafat flew to Cairo to meet with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, host of the summit, then stopped in London to meet with British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Arafat wants Britain and the European Union to become more involved in the Middle East.

In Washington, Hassan Abdel Rahman, the Palestine Liberation Organization's chief representative, said Arafat's White House meeting "should be seized upon to restart the negotiations by ending the onslaught on the Palestinian people by Israel."

Rahman, in an interview, said the Palestinians hope the meeting will help the flagging peace process.

Robert Satloff, executive director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, said, "It is remarkable that Arafat, despite repeated entreaties from the White House, is visiting the president without yet uttering in public a personal call for an end to the violence."

Without that, Satloff said in an interview, "it is difficult to imagine any possible return to diplomacy."

Shibley Telhami, a political scientist at the University of Maryland, said Arafat wants to explore the possibility of a comprehensive deal in Clinton's remaining 21/2 months in office.

"The Palestinians, at this point, cannot envision a return to an incremental approach," Telhami said in an interview. The situation on the ground has changed, and "Arafat wants a read on the possibility of a comprehensive deal and on Israel's assessment of what has transpired."

James Zogby, president of the Arab American Institute, urged Clinton to use his meetings with Arafat and Barak to fashion a more aggressive approach to the volatile region.

"This is not a situation where Band-Aids can easily be placed," Zogby said in an interview.

"The situation is hemorrhaging in too many places, and my sense is that we not only have an Israeli-Palestinian problem, but there is an unraveling in the broader region that requires a critical reassessment in the U.S. of our approach to the region."

Israeli helicopters swooped down on a pickup truck Thursday and fired rockets at a Palestinian gunman the army had been tracking for days, an attack Israel said signals a new policy targeting organizers of recent violence.

The killing of Hussein Abayat, described by Israel as the "terrorist mastermind" responsible for the deaths of three of its soldiers, came on the day President Clinton launched his latest attempt to salvage the peace process, meeting with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in Washington.

Two women passing by were killed in the attack in this bucolic village bordering Bethlehem and 11 people were wounded, including another well-known Palestinian gunman.



Palestinian Commanders' Car Bombed Associated Press Online November 9, 2000; Thursday

Despite Prime Minister Ehud Barak's earlier pledges not to take pre-emptive actions a policy he had said would destroy prospects for a return to the negotiating table the move was a concession to army chiefs who have been eager to strike the Palestinians with greater force.

"It was a pre-emptive strike by intention," Deputy Defense Minister Ephraim Sneh told The Associated Press. "For sure it is a signal. If the game is a guerrilla war, we are the champions of the world."

More than 180 people have been killed in six weeks of clashes, the vast majority of them Palestinians. But targeting leaders raised the stakes, and the Palestinians swiftly pledged retaliation.

Hassan Asfour, a senior Palestinian negotiator known for his good relations with the Israelis, told Palestinian television he had warned them that "the long arm cannot reach out without having its fingers cut off."

Abayat was a commander in Fatah, Arafat's faction of the PLO, and a leaflet signed by the group appeared in Bethlehem on Thursday night calling Israeli army chief Lt. Gen. Shaul Mofaz a "wanted man."

Clinton was meeting with Arafat on Thursday and with Barak on Sunday, probably his final effort to salvage a peace process he cultivated so carefully for seven years.

The president's national security adviser, Sandy Berger, declined to discuss the specifics of the incident Thursday but said: "Violence breeds violence and we must find a way to break this cycle. It's important for people on both sides to do all they can to try to achieve that."

Mofaz predicted a rash of violence in the immediate future, but said the time had come to show Israel's power.

"In the short run, this response will increase the activity of armed Fatah men in the area," he acknowledged to Israel radio. "But in the long run, everyone who wants to harm Israeli army soldiers and citizens of Israel must know that he won't be spared."

Senior Israeli military staff appeared almost eager to share details of the attack a sign that it was intended as a warning.

"We have been watching him for quite a long time, looking for a good opportunity, whenever he is preparing some new attack," Maj. Gen. Giora Eiland, the army's operations chief, told the AP.

Eiland said Israeli forces watched Abayat observe an Israeli position, then walk over to his parked truck with two colleagues and get in. He said the army believed Abayat was transporting weapons to conduct an attack. "This is the moment that we chose in order to shoot him," he said.

Another army official, Maj. Gen. Yitzhak Eitan, said intelligence showed Abayat was on his way to attack an Israeli military camp in the area.

Moments earlier, Abayat had been enjoying a cup of coffee with a woman friend and her aunt and mocking the helicopters hovering overhead.

"They came to visit us and we were just talking and making fun of helicopters in the sky," said Jahane Shaabat. "And then I had to take my aunt somewhere and we started to leave, and they got in their cars and when they were leaving they were hit."

One rocket hit Abayat's green truck, where he was sitting, and another hit the street, breaking up the pavement.

Two women in their 50s were killed, and seven civilians were wounded. Witnesses said the civilians had been clearly visible. The army said no civilians were visible nearby.

Within minutes of the attack, the street winding up an exposed hill was filled with medics and security officials. The truck was a mangle of twisted, blackened metal.

Palestinian Commanders' Car Bombed Associated Press Online November 9, 2000; Thursday

Four other gunmen, two in the truck with Abayat and two in a car traveling behind, were wounded. Palestinian officials said Abayat had been on patrol, in a pickup truck with civilian plates.

"He was a soldier for the Palestinian Authority," said Fadi Salahat, whose uncle Khaled another commander in Arafat's Fatah faction was critically wounded. "He was patrolling the area to protect the people of Bethlehem and Beit Sahour from Israeli occupiers."

Salahat, who is also a senior intelligence officer, was kept under close guard in Beit Sahour hospital.

It has not been unusual for Israel to launch helicopter gunship attacks on Palestinian targets in retaliation for shooting attacks, but until now the targets have mainly been sites such as military headquarters and police stations, with any attack preceded by warnings to evacuate.

There was no warning in this case "if you are aiming for a person you don't give a warning," Eiland said.

LOAD-DATE: November 9, 2000





EVENT: BRIEFING - CENTER FOR POLICY ANALYSIS ON PALESTINE (CPAP) TIME: 12:pm noon FNS  
DAYBOOK November 9, 2000



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November 9, 2000

EDITION: THE WEEK AHEAD

SECTION: GENERAL NEWS EVENTS

LENGTH: 88 words

EVENT: BRIEFING - CENTER FOR POLICY ANALYSIS ON PALESTINE (CPAP)

TIME: 12:pm noon

SUBJECT: Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine (CPAP) presents "A Diplomatic Status Report on the Recent Summits" luncheon briefing.

Nabil Fahmy, Egyptian ambassador, and Hassan Abdel Rahman, chief representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Palestine National Authority in Washington

CPAP, 2425-35 Virginia Avenue NW, Washington, DC -- November 9, 2000

202-338-1290

LOAD-DATE: November 5, 2000



No Cease Fire;Political Wrap;A Pause for Humor;Silver Anniversary The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer October 20, 2000, Friday



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The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer

October 20, 2000, Friday Transcript #6880

LENGTH: 8922 words

HEADLINE: No Cease Fire;  
Political Wrap;  
A Pause for Humor;  
Silver Anniversary

BYLINE: ANCHOR: JIM LEHRER; GUESTS: TOVA HERZL; HASAN RAHMAN; FOCUS -  
POLITICAL WRAP: MARK SHIELDS; PAUL GIGOT; VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE; GOV. GEORGE  
W. BUSH; ROBERT MAC NEIL; CORRESPONDENTS: FRED DE SAM LAZARO; BETTY ANN  
BOWSER; SUSAN DENTZER; RAY SUAREZ; SPENCER MICHELS; MARGARET WARNER;  
GWEN IFILL; TERENCE SMITH; KWAME HOLMAN

BODY:

JIM LEHRER: Good evening. I'm Jim Lehrer. On the NewsHour tonight, the renewed crisis of violence between Israelis and Palestinians, political analysis by Mark Shields and Paul Gigot, and a MacNeil-Lehrer 25th anniversary conversation with Robert MacNeil. It all follows our summary of the news this Friday.

#### NEWS SUMMARY

JIM LEHRER: This was one of the deadliest days yet in three weeks of fighting in the Middle East. Palestinian gunmen and stone-throwers battled Israeli troops across the West Bank and near Jerusalem. Nine Palestinians were killed and 67 wounded. Six Israelis were hurt. The fighting erupted despite a cease-fire that President Clinton mediated this week at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. In Washington, State Department Spokesman Richard Boucher said there's still hope.

RICHARD BOUCHER: Today has been a particularly difficult day. And we certainly regret the additional loss of life and the violence that has occurred. However, despite the anger and the frustration at what was happening on the ground, at Sharm el-Sheik, there was a recognition from both sides that a negotiated solution was the only way to end this confrontation. And both sides seemed to recognize that a negotiated solution, however difficult it is to achieve, is immensely preferable to a future of continued violence and bloodshed.

JIM LEHRER: We'll have more on this story right after the News Summary. A former U.S. Army sergeant pleaded guilty today to helping plot the U.S. Embassy bombings in Africa. Ali Mohamed, a native of Egypt, appeared in federal court in New York. He admitted he scouted sites in Nairobi, Kenya before the attacks in 1998. And he said he met with Osama bin Laden, the alleged mastermind of the plot. The bombings in Kenya and Tanzania killed 224 people, including 12 Americans. In the U.S. presidential race today, Governor Bush defended his tax cut plan. In Manchester, New Hampshire, he rejected Vice President Gore's criticism that it would hurt the economy. He said Americans pay more to the government than they spend on food, clothing, and housing, and he said that's the real threat to the economy.



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GOV. GEORGE W. BUSH: The percentage of GDP taxes are the highest they have been since Pearl Harbor. And pretty soon, those high taxes are going to have an effect on our economy. At least, that's our point of view. We also believe this: When you reduce taxes on the people who work, when you give them more money to spend, it serves as an insurance policy against an economic downturn. It seems to me to make sense if there's been a failed energy policy and heating oil is going up and gasoline is going up, why not give people some of their own money back that we have a surplus, to be able to afford the basics in life.

JIM LEHRER: Later, Bush campaigned in Bangor, Maine. He was joined by Arizona Senator John McCain, his former rival for the Republican nomination. Vice President Gore said today he'd welcome campaign help from President Clinton. He dismissed reports of tension between them, and he said they remain "good friends." As for making joint appearances, he said details of Mr. Clinton's role in the campaign haven't been worked out. He spoke aboard Air Force Two.

GOV. GEORGE W. BUSH: This is a campaign that I am running owe my own. And as I've said on previous occasions, I am who I am. I'm running in my own right with my own vision about the future of our country. We face new challenges in a new time. We are fortunate to have a strong economic foundation to stand upon. And the big question is whether or not we will have prosperity for all.

JIM LEHRER: President Clinton and Vice President Gore joined thousands of others today at a memorial service for Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan. He was killed Monday in a plane crash, along with his son and a top aide. The mourners marched around the state capitol in Jefferson City, to a slow, steady drum beat. In his eulogy, Mr. Clinton said of Carnahan, "he was a leader like Harry Truman. He spoke the plain truth." And that's it for the News Summary tonight. Now it's on to the worsening situation in the Middle East, Shields and Gigot, and some anniversary words from Robert MacNeil.

#### FOCUS - NO CEASE FIRE

JIM LEHRER: We begin our Middle East coverage with a report by Lindsay Taylor of Independent Television News.

LINDSAY TAYLOR: Countdown to a cease-fire, but as the deadline approached, the violence intensified. The world's major powers had persuaded Israeli and Palestinian leaders to work towards a truce, but on the ground here in Ramallah, this was the response. Once again, from behind barricades, stone-throwing Palestinians vent their anger. The Israelis retaliate, firing their weapons. The result: Injuries, and again, death. Today, a 13-year-old boy and a 19-year-old were among those shot dead. In Bethlehem, similar scenes, as all the hopes of the Sharm el-Sheikh summit seemed to evaporate. ( Gunfire ) On the West Bank, too, there was aggravation and retaliation. The would-be truce is a key test of the two sides' ability to end the violence, and prevent the slide into all-out confrontation. But if the scenes today are anything to go by, there is no cease-fire. The countdown was to more conflict. In Nablus, Palestinian gunmen opened fire on Israeli soldiers at the checkpoint. Four Palestinians were killed, and others wounded in the exchange. (Gunfire ) Six Israeli soldiers were injured in Tulkom, when they were reportedly fired on by Palestinian police after their vehicle took a wrong turning. There had been signs after the summit that the clashes may have been easing, but today the violence was as bad as in recent weeks, if not worse. A spokesman for the Israeli prime minister, Ehud Barak, accused the Palestinian Authority of failing to fulfill its part of the understandings of the summit. In turn, Israel was accused by the Palestinians of wrecking hopes for peace. Being killed out there, too, is the best international efforts could bring this violence to an end. The U.N. Secretary General says the next 48 hours will be crucial, but already it appears too late. There is a cycle of retribution now in place that seems impossible to break, a conflict with a momentum that for now, at least, seems unstoppable.

JIM LEHRER: And to Ray Suarez.

RAY SUAREZ: For more on the breakdown in the cease-fire between the Israelis and Palestinians, we go to Tova Herzl, minister for congressional affairs at the Israeli embassy in Washington, who has just been named Israel's ambassador to South Africa; and Hassan Abdel Rahman, the chief PLO representative in Washington.

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RAY SUAREZ: Tova Herzl, let's start with you. The deadline came and went. A cease-fire did not begin. Why not?

TOVA HERZL: Israel fulfilled what it had committed to do as part of the cease-fire. We opened up the airport in the Gaza Strip. We opened the borders between Jordan and Egypt and Israel. We lifted the barricade or the siege beyond the Palestinian city. Unfortunately in parallel, the Palestinian authorities declared today a day of rage. We thought it was a day of cease-fire. They thought it was day of rage. Rage against what? Rage against cease-fire? Rage against the possibility of peace? It was a terrible day today. It was a terrible day yesterday when a group of hikers, who might have made misjudgment in where they should be hiking in this kind of situation, were attacked by the Tanzim, which is directly controlled by somebody who reports to Arafat. They were not evacuated. Somebody bled to death. We are seeing terrible, terrible, terrible days. But it's not too late.

RAY SUAREZ: Hasan Rahman, why didn't a cease-fire begin today.

HASAN RAHMAN: The rage was against a massacre of Palestinians by Israeli troops. The Israeli killing of Palestinians has not stopped since Sharm el-Sheikh. On the contrary, it has intensified. And we saw the massacre today by Israeli troops of so many Palestinians, young as well as old. There are nine Palestinian martyrs today, and over 70 wounded and 200 more hurt. This is not a cease-fire. This is really a one-sided war declared by Israel against the Palestinian population. I believe that Mr. Barak is trying to pay in advance to Mr. Sharon in exchange for forming what is going to be a national unity government, which is going to be a government of war against the Palestinians.

RAY SUAREZ: But let me follow up there. At Sharm el-Sheikh, President Clinton said that both sides, both Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat had promised immediate concrete measures to end the confrontation. Now on every confrontation, there are two sides in confrontation. Did the Palestinians side...

HASAN RAHMAN: Absolutely. We issued a statement to the Palestinians. The Palestinians abided by it. Israel, instead of withdrawing its troops, it elected more check-points. It intensified its military presence in the Palestinian territories and it intensified its shooting of Palestinian civilians. Therefore, there was one-sided declaration, and that's ours. While Mr. Barak was paying lip service to the cease-fire, he ordered his troops to fire live ammunition on Palestinians. And we saw today what are the results.

TOVA HERZL: There were a few catch words in what Mr. Rahman said. One was the word martyrs. It seems that somebody wants martyrs for a cause, which would much better be served at the negotiating table. The second thing is as you saw in the ITN reports, Palestinians started shooting; we only use live fire when we are shot at. We do not use live fire unless we are shot at. And somebody should ask the question what these young people, children by my standards, are doing where troops are shooting from; it's an excellent question and I think it should be raised. Why are children there where people are shooting? What is the point? And should we not respond when we are shot at? Should we not respond when we are shot at? Not one of these shooting incidents was begun by us. We do not throw live fire at stones. We shoot live fire when we are fired upon.

HASAN RAHMAN: Those kids were protesting with the stones. You do not have to fire live ammunition to on them to kill them? There are Jews who sometimes throw stones on Jewish soldiers. Do you kill Jews? You kill Palestinians because you feel that Palestinian life is much cheaper than a Jewish live. We saw that the results of this confrontation, the report said, seven Israelis hurt, nine Palestinians killed, 78 wounded by live ammunition and 200 other Palestinians hurt.

RAY SUAREZ: Tova Herzl coming out of the area, news reports have said that the Fatah faction of the PLO was, in fact, had a militia out in the field and they were shooting in the direction of Israeli soldiers. However, there were also many thousands of civilians from the news reports, like the one we just saw, who appear to be unarmed. Is there, in your view, a nuanced response to these differing kinds of threats?

TOVA HERZL: Certainly there is. We do not respond with live fire unless we are shot upon with live fire. There are other means, which are used when it's not live fire. But this is categorical. And for anybody

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to expect us not to shoot back when we are shot upon that's not...what kind of response is that to expect from anybody? Yes, we do shoot back. Unfortunately there are victims. There are victims, unfortunately. This violence has to stop. Now, Mr. Barak came out categorically after the Sharon summit in person and said we are prepared to comply. To this date, we have not heard a word from Mr. Arafat. What we heard was after some pressure, a statement from Palestinian sources not even from the Palestinian Authority in parallel, the incitement, the official Palestinian media is continuing completely unabated. Today was a day of rage. What does a day of rage mean? We talk loud when there is a day of rage? A day of rage instead of a ceasefire?

HASAN RAHMAN: Rage against the atrocities committed by the Israelis. You seem to miss the basic point. The basic point is that Israeli army is in Palestinian towns. It is in Palestinian villages. It's attacking Palestinians in their own homes. Those Palestinians are not in Israel. They are in Palestine. They are within the limits of Palestinian town. Why do you have to have tanks in Palestinian towns? Why do you have to have soldiers in Palestinian towns? Why don't you stay on your side of the borders? Why do you have to impose yourself on Palestinians? That is the basic problem. This is a protest by the Palestinians against 33 years of military occupation, denial of the basic political and human rights of the Palestinians. The Palestinians want independence from Israel.

RAY SUAREZ: In the last few hours the prime minister of Israel declared a time out in the peace process. What does your government mean by that?

TOVA HERZL: The prime minister said after the summit in Cairo this weekend he will consider his options and see where the situation is going. But may I just add that in parallel to what the prime minister said, I just read the polls in the Israeli weekend papers. Amazingly the prime minister is not doing so well in the polls. But 62% of the Israeli public, despite what we have seen over the last few weeks, 62% of the Israeli public still thinks we ought to talk to the Palestinians. We do not want to be engaged in this. We do not want days of rage. We want peace. But we want peace with somebody who wants peace; not with somebody who substitutes rage for cease-fire, for somebody who replaces incitement for preparing the public for the fact that peace does require some compromises. We were engaged for seven years in the process of negotiations. We came this close, and somebody had an interest to produce martyrs rather than to produce a peace treaty. It's very sad.

HASAN RAHMAN: I have no doubt that 62% of the Israeli public want peace. The Israeli government does not want peace. Mr. Barak seems to look... wants to look for a pretext out of the peace process, especially after Camp David. That's why he deployed more troops in the Palestinian territories even before those events took place. There was reoccupation of the West Bank by Israeli soldiers, more settlements, more confiscation of land. So Mr. Barak, after Camp David, wanted to impose on the Palestinians what he could not get on the negotiating table. He wanted to achieve it from the Palestinians concessions by military force.

RAY SUAREZ: So, quickly, when you hear the words time out, you're saying that Barak is trying to pull out of the peace process.

HASAN RAHMAN: He is confirming what he has been trying to do for a long time: To get out of the peace process. We declared our commitment to the peace process. We believe that neither the Israelis nor the Palestinians have any alternative to peace. It is absolutely nonsense any notion that the Palestinians do not want peace. We want peace. We are the victims of the continued conflict. We are paying the price. We pay it with the lives of our people. There are 120 people killed and over 5,000 people wounded. It is impossible; it is insulting even. It borders on racism, to accuse us that we want our people killed.

RAY SUAREZ: We're going to have to leave it. This conversation will continue. Thank you both.

JIM LEHRER: Still to come on the NewsHour tonight, Shields and Gigot, and some birthday talk with Robert MacNeil.

FOCUS - POLITICAL WRAP

JIM LEHRER: Margaret Warner is with Mark and Paul.

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MARGARET WARNER: That's syndicated columnist Mark Shields and "Wall Street Journal" columnist Paul Gigot. All right. Gentlemen, the debates are over. How has the race shifted in the last three weeks?

PAUL GIGOT: It's flipped. The debates moved, Margaret, moved Bush into the situation that Gore really was in before the debates and that is with a small but nonetheless, significant lead. And I think the debates did a couple of things for Bush. One is they gave him a boost over Gore on personal qualities: Trustworthiness, honesty and certainly likeability, leadership -- and reinforced that personal qualities and credibility. They also allowed Bush to fight, I think, to a draw with Gore on what were supposed to have been some of Gore's best issues, defining issues, winning issues: Education, health care, maybe still a little behind on health care, but he has closed the gap on Social Security, and defined Gore as something he doesn't want to be defined as which is an old time Democrat, a bigger spender than Bill Clinton. That has hurt him in an awful lot of swing states.

MARGARET WARNER: Do you agree, Mark, do you think that the debates had that kind of an impact, a positive Bush impact?

MARK SHIELDS: I think they had a positive Bush impact, not to the dimensions that Paul described.

PAUL GIGOT: I said a small lead.

MARK SHIELDS: Small but significant lead. I think the race is an absolute dead heat today, but it wasn't three weeks ago. Paul is right. George Bush then trailed. And the debates were good. He exceeded expectations. I said earlier that I thought he faced a different standard from Al Gore. He faced pass/fail. He passed. And Gore got B minuses and C pluses and more scrutiny. But the race today is a dead heat. Gore still enjoys enormous advantages over Bush on most of the issues of interest to people. Add to that Gore has a big lead in knowledge and compassion over Bush. Bush does have an honest lead over Gore on honesty and moral standards. But the race is a tie for very simple reasons, and that is that neither candidate has been able to resolve the doubts that people have about them. The "Wall Street Journal" pollsters Bob Teeter and Peter Hart this week found 43% of Americans find themselves comfortable with the idea of George Bush's knowledge and capacity that he has his vision to be President. The same 43% only found themselves comfortable with Al Gore's honesty and straightforwardness to be President. So each of them has that. And I don't know quite frankly, Margaret, how they resolve it in the remaining days. I mean, they're probably going to have to run with these liabilities to the end.

MARGARET WARNER: All right. Let's look at how the race is shaping up in another way now that the debates are over, because, as we know, the President isn't elected nationally but state by state. In the past three weeks, those standings seem to have shifted too. According to independent analyst Charles Cook, who closely tracks state polls, the electoral map right now looks like this. These states are solid, that is the ones in red, are considered solid likely or leaning for Bush. That adds up to 205 possible electoral votes. And here's how it looks for Gore -- the states in blue -- 187 potential electoral votes. And these, the others, are of course, the toss-ups. Now we know that these shift all the time and they are basically just based on state polls with margins of error. But still in the last three weeks, that's basically a reverse. Gore used to lead in the electoral vote count. What do you think is happening state by state? Where do you think the shifts have occurred and why?

PAUL GIGOT: Well, I think that the big picture is that more than in 1992 or 1996, this is a much more competitive race in many more states. The Republican National Committee source told me they're competing on the air and advertising in 22 states right now, which is an awful lot of states, almost half of them. So there is no question about that. There is no state that Bob Dole carried in 1996 that Al Gore is really competing in. But I counted about 17 states that Bill Clinton has carried twice where George Bush is at least competitive, not necessarily ahead, but is at least on the air or competitive. So I think this demonstrates that Bush, you know, a lot of the swing states is really competitive when you wouldn't expect them to. I mean Minnesota?. The poll today said he was up three. Part of that is Ralph Nader because Ralph Nader is scoring eight points in Minnesota. Nader is hurting Gore, I think, in Minnesota, in Wisconsin, in Iowa in the upper Northwest and Oregon and Washington. And that's something that Gore



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has to watch out for because Bush could come in and steal those states; whereas Pat Buchanan, the third party candidate who has threatens Bush from the right, he is negligible in any survey.

MARK SHIELDS: Shields: America is not static. America changes. We have a tendency in politics to say well, Michael Dukakis carried that state, therefore it is a Democratic state permanently. States in play now that should be were reliably the Republicans -- North Carolina, all of a sudden North Carolina is up for grabs. Nevada, which people thought was a lock for the Republicans going in is now very much in competition.

MARGARET WARNER: So you're saying, in other words, the shift hasn't all been just towards Bush., that a lot more states are in play?

MARK SHIELDS: And it's not only migration from outside the United States; it's in migration within the United States. Take the state of Florida. I mean today there are more non-Cuban Latinos in Florida than there are Cuban Latinos. And the reality is that the Democrats are betting the farm on Florida. Make no mistake about it. It is a big, big bet for them. But they feel if they can deprive George Bush of the state where his brother is the governor with a 65% approval rating, Jeb Bush has, that they would deprive George Bush of the 270 votes he needs to put together for the presidency. So you have a whole series of other factors. First of all George W. Bush is not Bob Dole. All right. I mean, Bob Dole, while an admirable legislative leader and a distinguished American, was not a good national candidate. George Bush has been a lot better candidate with a lot more united party behind him and Al Gore is not Bill Clinton.

MARGARET WARNER: With only 18 days left though, don't the candidates have to start picking and choosing? Where do you think they're going to focus or can they continue spending money everywhere?

PAUL GIGOT: No, they can't. They have to make strategic choices. I think the pressure probably is a little bit more on the Democrats right now as far as the choices because they have maybe a little bit more... Less money at the national level. It's going to be fascinating. The Bush strategists today told me they feel they are only behind five points in California. Now part of that reason is they have been running ads and Al Gore hasn't because Al Gore thinks the state is safe for him. What happens if Bush makes a big push in the next week in California. Then does Gore have to take money away from Florida and away from Pennsylvania and Michigan, put it into California and contest that? Otherwise he is holding... Keeping his fingers crossed thinking he can win anyway. That's high stakes in a state he has to win. But the real point is that this year -- unlike 1992 and 1996 - in the last two weeks there will be tactical decisions where you put your money that could make the difference in this election.

MARK SHIELDS: Bush is in the same position, for example, in Illinois. Illinois and Ohio are sort of the book ends of the Midwest as far as electoral votes. The Democrats haven't written off Ohio but they don't think Al Gore is going to carry it. The Republicans haven't written off Illinois because the Speaker of the House's state and all of rest of it but there is an acknowledgment.

PAUL GIGOT: Pretty close.

MARK SHIELDS: It's reflected in expenditures they don't think they can. The wild card in this race and it can't be overstated is Nader. I say that not simply because of the states involved, I mean states the Democrats have carried in the past: Washington, Oregon, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa. But the fact that he... this is a passionless race. We have two men running for President, neither of whom is a movement. There is nobody running for office today saying I'm a Bush Republican. I mean George Bush was a President's son. Al Gore came up as a Vice President. There is no sense of maverick, there is no sense of movement, there is no sense of we're taking on the established order and we're going to change things. The only candidate who has generated passion is Ralph Nader and Ralph Nader has done it in a way that these guys couldn't do. He has had 12,000 people pay \$10 each to get into rallies in Minneapolis and Boston and Portland and Seattle. I mean you couldn't... George Bush couldn't get 10,000 people to pay ten dollars. He could get ten thousand people to pay \$1,000. Al Gore couldn't get ten thousand people to pay \$10. That's where the turnout is going to be because Nader is going to be a factor in those states. And if

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Nader goes to high single digits or into double digits, Margaret, then it spells nothing but trouble for the Democrats.

MARGARET WARNER: Now, what about the other figure hovering over this race, not a candidate, Bill Clinton? I noticed today and we ran a clip of it earlier, Gore may be prompted by this "New York Times" story today, but Gore was asked twice today about do you want Bill Clinton campaigning for you and so on. What is this all about?

PAUL GIGOT: It's about, I think, Al Gore's fundamental ambivalence about Bill Clinton as his mentor and as somebody who may or may not help him. In a way, Al Gore's ambivalence is the country's ambivalence about Bill Clinton. Great job approval rating, awful personal approval rating. We have never had that in a two-term sitting President. Reagan -- Eisenhower -- both more popular personally than in their job approval. And the only people that Bill Clinton motivates than Democrats are Republicans. So there is a real danger for Gore, that if Bill Clinton gets in, that it no longer will be seen as a Gore-Lieberman ticket. It becomes again a Gore-Clinton ticket. And that historically over the last year has been where Al Gore has not been the strongest. He was strongest after the convention when he broke out on his own when it was a Gore-Lieberman ticket.

MARGARET WARNER: There are many congressional Democrats who want Clinton in this race.

MARK SHIELDS: Absolutely. I dissent from Paul in this sense. Al Gore might be ambivalent about Bill Clinton; he's not ambivalent about wanting the presidency. And Bill Clinton is the big enchilada in this race. He is the guy who is the most popular Democrat in the country among Democrats. Among the one out of four voters who are undecided according to Bob Teeter and Peter Hart, Clinton gets a 71% favorable rating. That's not much of a risk. I mean, you know, sure they don't like the guy, they prefer that he hadn't behaved the way he had. But you are talking about somebody who is coming in with enormously positive credentials on framing the issues for this campaign. I don't know a Democrat in shoe leather, Margaret, who didn't watch the third debate when George Bush got up there and said you're picking winners in this tax code. I mean, Bill Clinton would have hit that out of the park. You mean to say you don't pick winners the way you do it and the way you reward those well off... It would have been gang busters. You'll see Bill Clinton back in this race.

PAUL GIGOT: When Ronald Reagan and Eisenhower came on the stump in the last part of the '60 and '88 races, they were assets. Bill Clinton is a double-edged sword.

MARK SHIELDS: And Bill Clinton has to come out immediately, immediately for a simple reason. You get one day's story, as Paul is talking about. Should Clinton be out? Then the rest of it, you get Clinton campaigning and let's be frank about it. I mean, the gipper was good, but Clinton is better.

PAUL GIGOT: But Reagan was loved and Clinton, there is just this sense that they don't... A lot of people don't like him. A lot of people are going to go out because they don't want to give Bill Clinton that third term if he identifies himself so closely with Al Gore.

MARGARET WARNER: But Al Gore is going to have to say I really want him in for real.

MARK SHIELDS: I mean he's already out. He is doing for Democrats. But Gore is ambivalent but wants to win.

MARGARET WARNER: We have to leave it there. Thanks.

FOCUS - A PAUSE FOR HUMOR

JIM LEHRER: And now a little more politics. Vice President Gore and Governor Bush were both in New York City last night at the annual Al Smith dinner. That's a white-tie charity event honoring the former Democratic Governor of New York who lost his bid for the presidency in 1928. Here are some excerpts.

VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE: I'm honored to be at this year's Al Smith Memorial Foundation dinner. This dinner represents a hallowed and important tradition, which I actually did invent. (Laughter) And, of course, I want to acknowledge FEMA Director James Lee Witt, who accompanied me here

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tonight. (Laughter) We travel everywhere together. (Laughter) Please accept my apology for interrupting your meal. Since this is a special occasion, I wanted to mark it by getting all of my interruptions out of the way before Governor Bush speaks. (Laughter) I know some people are going to keep accusing me of exaggeration, so let me be clear. Those people seek nothing less than the complete destruction of the American way of life. (Laughter) (applause) It's absolutely clear. I never exaggerate. You can ask Tipper or any one of our 11 daughters. (Laughter) Another thing that bugs me is when people say I am just a wonk, obsessed with policy detail. Well, like some many Americans, I like to just kick back and relax and watch television for relaxation. One of my favorite shows is "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" Well, it should really be called "Who Wants to be After Taxes a \$651,437.70 Person?" (Laughter) Of course, that's under my plan. Under Governor Bush's plan... (Laughter) it would be "Who Wants to be After Taxes a \$701,587.80 Person?" (Laughter) This is a fund-raiser, isn't it? Whenever I see everybody dressed the same way, my antenna goes straight up. (Laughter) I also make you this simple pledge: If I am entrusted with the presidency, I may not always be the funniest President, but I will never sigh to you. Thank you. God bless you, and God bless America. (Applause)

GOV. GEORGE W. BUSH: Thank you all very much. This is an impressive crowd-- the haves and the have-mores. (Laughter) Some people call you the elite. I call you my base. (Laughter) The woman I just ran into coming off the elevator, she said, "I'd like to give you some advice on what to wear." I said, "well, I appreciate that." She said, "white tie is fine, but you need some more earth tones." (Laughter) Perfectly nice woman. I think her name is Naomi or something like that. The odd thing was she handed me a bill for \$15,000. (Laughter) Can you imagine? Sure, a grown man paying \$15,000 for somebody to tell you what to wear? Heck, \$15,000 these days gets you a sleepover in the Lincoln Bedroom. (Laughter) (cheers and applause) This evening does have a special meaning. The story of Al Smith's historic run for the presidency is truly inspiring. It gives me hope that in America, it's still not possible for a fellow named Al to be the commander in chief. (Laughter) And I see Bill Buckley is here tonight-- fellow Yale man. (Applause) We go way back, and we have a lot in common. Bill wrote a book at Yale; I read one. (Laughter) He founded the Conservative Party. I started a few parties myself. (Laughter) Bill was certain he won every debate he had. Well, I know how he feels. (Laughter) It's been a pleasure to be with you all tonight. Your excellency, Laura and I would like you to come and visit our family next year. I'll send you the address as soon as I know what it is. Thank you very much, God bless. (Applause)

#### FOCUS - SILVER ANNIVERSARY

JIM LEHRER: And finally tonight, a little birthday talk. It was 25 years ago tonight that a new television program went on the air in New York with this opening.

(MUSIC PLAYING IN BACKGROUND)

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Good evening. ...

JIM LEHRER: As direct descendants from that came the MacNeil-Lehrer Report, the MacNeil-Lehrer NewsHour, and after Robert MacNeil retired five years ago, this current years ago, this current program. To mark our family anniversary, I spoke with Robin earlier this evening from New York.

JIM LEHRER: Robin, good evening, sir.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Good evening.

JIM LEHRER: First, tell the story of how all this happened. How did the Robert MacNeil Report come into being?

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Well, you remember that when you and I did the Watergate hearings, it created a bit of a tension and people thought you and I were a team, and maybe there should be a nightly program; that was back in '73. And it didn't work out then, and I went back to the BBC, where I was working, and then the New York station, WNET, said, why don't you come and start it here, and I did. And we were trying to create in an atmosphere so different from today - when there were basically only the three networks and maybe one independent station in each city - something that would complement what commercial television did brilliantly but briefly each night and would also create a role that would be different for public television and make a journalistic contribution. And that's really how it started. And



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we were given a budget of \$1 1/2 million, which for a year was about what the networks spent in a week - sometimes in a day. And what we came up with was something that we could afford with that amount of money that would be a real alternative. And so that's really how it began.

JIM LEHRER: And it was one story a night for 30 minutes.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Exactly. Because what did the networks not do in their brilliant half-hour coverage, which commanded the attention of the whole - of the whole nation? They didn't go into any detail into one story, and so we thought, well, we can do that. And Channel 13 had the brilliant idea of scheduling it right after the network news shows ran. So we could pick up the audience that might have hunger for something in more depth right after that. In fact, you remember, we even ran some funny commercials saying - or newspaper ads - saying, watch Walter Cronkite; then watch us - watch John Chancellor; then watch us. And because there was nothing much else on then, it worked, and it really caught on. Within a few months it was picked up by the PBS network and then the station you were attached to - Washington - joined in, and instead of being with Jim Lehrer in Washington, it became the MacNeil/Lehrer Report.

JIM LEHRER: Which I remember as being a brilliant decision too when it became the MacNeil/Lehrer Report.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: I can't imagine why.

JIM LEHRER: Remember our joke at the time was that there was some discussion and some dispute about what the title should be.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Yeah.

JIM LEHRER: And that they turned it over to our mothers, and they decided on the MacNeil/Lehrer Report.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Well, the other thing that - remembering now what we thought at the time - and you're nice to ask me these questions, but you were at least as much a contributor of all this as I was -- that we thought, what are the networks not - what can we introduce that isn't going? Well, as you know, television at the time despised talking heads. Talking heads were all we could afford. So how could we make talking heads interesting and coherent? How could we add a kind of respect for complexity to the news that was already there? And really that's how our concept was born.

JIM LEHRER: Well, speaking of talking heads, I quote you all the time, so why don't we get it directly from you about your wonderful line about how we get all the things that really - all the information that really matters to us.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Yeah. It struck me as really extraordinary that commercial television had built up this antipathy to the talking heads. For one thing, the talking head is the only thing that fits the television screen life size, and I think at a primitive level in all our consciousness, that meant something; it was real. And the other thing is this despised talking head is how all of us hear the things that really matter to us: You're hired; you're fired; I love you; I hate you; will you marry me; I want a divorce - whatever it is - these are the things - and those talking heads don't usually come in a box with a picture over the shoulder, or voice over, action pictures, and so we thought that if we could re-establish the talking head as something vital and well edited, which was very important, and that we could just slow things down a little bit and make them a little more coherent and provide a little more context to the news, we would provide an alternative, and something additional, which is what commercial television, as I say, really brilliantly provided.

JIM LEHRER: And then in 1983, we got very ambitious; that's when we went to an hour.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Yeah. And we've begun to feel the limitations of the half hour because if you're doing only one story a night, which was our gimmick, and a good one, to attract attention to ourselves and be noticed, it is very limiting, and sometimes we made some really sill mistakes, mostly my fault, you know -

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JIM LEHRER: No, no, no.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: -- doing a light program about the plastic tomatoes, when something really important -

JIM LEHRER: We did 30 minutes on Pringle's potato chips.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: We did.

JIM LEHRER: With outrage... (laughter)...phony potato chips.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: I take the blame for that. And we really got - you know, we really got hoist with our own petard a few times, like going on about what terrible tomatoes the industry was producing now so you could have them all year, and we went out at random, bought tomatoes around the areas of the New York station, had the leading expert on tomatoes in, and she cut through the first one, and it was the most delicious smelling tomato ever and so on and so on ...

JIM LEHRER: I remember also in this very studio back in those days we were doing 30 minutes on new advances in banking, and they had brought in what was then called the new revolutionary thing called an ATM machine.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Right.

JIM LEHRER: And we were live, of course - everything we did was live -

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Right.

JIM LEHRER: And I couldn't get the thing to work, and I kept putting the card in; the money wouldn't come out and all that. Go ahead, sorry.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: ATM's have survived that.

JIM LEHRER: Oh, I know; they really have.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: But, so if we were saying we were just a complement to the networks up till '83, after '83, in the hour, we could really claim to be an alternative, and I think we and you have been ever since.

JIM LEHRER: Yeah. And as we changed all along - and then of course we - when you left about five years ago, there were other changes of personnel, as well as other little things all along, but the one thing that's never changed, Robin, is the philosophy behind this, the underlying principles under which we operate, which you started 25 years ago tonight.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Well, I started, but with - with your input because I'd learned a lot from you doing the - during the Watergate hearings. I learned a lot from you about fundamental fairness and objectivity and also the idea that the American public is smarter than they're often given credit for on television.

JIM LEHRER: Yeah.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: And they don't all need things in little bite-sized, candy-sized, "mcnuggets" of news. Some of them want something a little more grown-up and at a slower pace but a more thoughtful pace. And I think it's that ethic and those standards that have led to you being asked for two presidential elections in a row to be the moderator of all the debates.

JIM LEHRER: Yeah. Well -

ROBERT MAC NEIL: And you've just been through the fire on that.

JIM LEHRER: Boy, I really have been through the fire. That's the hardest work I've ever done, I must say, these last three debates.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Well, but you brought all those values to it. You know, there are a lot of people who still want the debates, and in the special you did a few weeks ago on previous debates, a lot of people

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are looking for the kind of gaffes and fireworks and dumb things or one liners or displays of anger that have been colorful in previous debates. And I think there's another factor, and I know that some people have criticized the way you - I think unfairly - or wrong-headedly - about the way you handled it. I think there's another factor here. Increasingly, as the candidates are more and more molded and controlled by the products of their focus groups and their advisers not to do a single thing that might alienate some potential voter, they become more and more sort of plastic in that - and restrained - in that way. And, therefore, their partisans failing - the candidates failing to really go at each other hammer and tongs and stick knives in each other or punch each other in the face, they want the moderator to do it. And that's not the moderator's function.

JIM LEHRER: They want the moderator to do the dirty work.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: I thought you did great.

JIM LEHRER: Well, thank you. But the bottom line here on these debates - and it's hard - and I believe this -- I would believe it if I had nothing to do with these particular three debates or any of the other ones I've moderated - is it doesn't matter what the format is; it doesn't matter about - that's kind of interesting if you have this format, that format, that format - but the bottom line is when you have the two major candidates for President of the United States on the same stage anywhere for 90 minutes talking about things that matter, it is in and of itself revealing to the voters. It reveals a lot about themselves, no matter how lousy the questions might be from the moderator, no matter how confining the format might be. The American people get to see these two men - in this case Vice President Gore and Governor Bush - as individuals, what they - hear them talk about what they believe, no matter how they expressed it or whatever. I mean, it is a terrific exercise for the democratic process.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: And it's a format that you didn't choose.

JIM LEHRER: No.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Every case, you were the prisoner of the format as much as they were.

JIM LEHRER: I know. People have jumped me for - you kept talking about the rules, the rules, you're violating the rules -- but I was confronted with a situation. I'm really not trying to defend myself, but the fact of the matter is that I'm going to - no, I was given a set of rules to enforce, and one of the candidates - Vice President Gore - wanted more flexibility in them - and Governor Bush wanted them rigidly enforced. And I would go a little bit one way and a little bit the other way, and I made some bad judgment calls, no question about that here and there along the way.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: No, I don't think you did. And what people don't know is how much behind-the-scenes work there was in that and, for instance, in the last debate you had 140 questions that came to you, and you had to choose among them with a reasonable balance and everything, and that was a major contribution. But I'd like to make another point about this: I think it flows out of the values of the program you do every night that it has a respect for the institutions of the democracy. I don't mean for the people in it occupying them necessarily, and I think we both agree that journalists are not here as disinterested bystanders in the democracy. We're not here just watching the idiots screw it up and making - and making a joke about it. We're all here as participants; we hold the edge of the fabric, and I think the exercise that you've done is a major contribution to that democratic process. As square as that may sound to a lot of people these days, we believe in it.

JIM LEHRER: Well, we do, and the people who watch this program know where it all came from. Of course, it came from you and it's been here for 25 years. Thank you very much, by the way, for what you just said, but before we go, bring us up to date on you. What have you been doing with yourself these last five years without us?

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Well, it's nice of you to ask. But you always ask questions you know the answer to.

JIM LEHRER: Well, it's a very simple question.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Well, I've been writing. I've published a couple of novels.

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JIM LEHRER: Tell us the titles.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: One was called -- since leaving the program - "The Voyage," and "Breaking News."

JIM LEHRER: Which is a terrific book about the television news business.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Thank you. I'm not up to your prolific rate, but - and I just finished the first draft of another one. I'm working on a play. I'm working with MacNeil/Lehrer Productions on trying to develop the 11 o'clock national news program called "National Edition," a sequel to "The Story of English" called "Do you Speak American" on American language today; I'm the chairman of the McDowell Colony, the oldest artists' colony in the United States; I work with the Freedom Forum, and the New York Public Library and the Japan Society, and the Theater for a New Audience, so I've been busy.

JIM LEHRER: So we shouldn't worry about you.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Well, if you want to ...

JIM LEHRER: Hey, look, as we used to say five nights a week, Good night, Robin.

ROBERT MAC NEIL: Good night, Jim.

RECAP

JIM LEHRER: The word I was trying to pronounce there was rotten, by the way. Again, the major stories of this Friday: It was one of the deadliest days in three weeks of violence in the Middle East despite a cease-fire agreement. At least nine Palestinians were killed; 67 wounded in clashes with Israeli troops. And a former U.S. Army sergeant pleaded guilty to helping plot the U.S. Embassy bombings in Africa two years ago. Our closing credits tonight are special, and longer than usual. What you will see are the names, in alphabetical order, of the many people who have worked on this program during the last 25 years. We'll see you online, and again here Monday evening. Have a nice weekend. I'm Jim Lehrer. Thank you, and good night.

LOAD-DATE: October 23, 2000











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HEADLINE: Can Yasser Arafat Stop the Violence in the Middle East?

GUESTS: Oded Eran, Hassan Abdel Rahman

BYLINE: Lou Waters

HIGHLIGHT:

Some Palestinian groups today expressed skepticism over the Sharm el- Sheikh agreement. They say it's impossible for the Palestinian leadership to flip the switch and turn off the violence.

BODY:

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LOU WATERS, CNN ANCHOR: Some Palestinian groups today expressed skepticism over the Sharm El-Sheikh agreement. They say it's impossible for the Palestinian leadership to flip the switch and turn off the violence.

Former President Carter, the catalyst for the first Camp David summit, echoed that sentiment in a conversation with CNN.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JIMMY CARTER, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: If we think that Arafat can just issue an edict or an order, like a dictator, and everyone is going to get off the streets or everyone is going to comply completely with a peaceful settlement, we're sadly mistaken.

He obviously has a great deal of influence because the Palestinians, even those who don't agree with him often, realize there's no other leader that can come close to holding the diverse element in the Palestinian community together. So they respect him to stay there.

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But I think we greatly overestimate in the American press and in the American government circles in Washington the power and the authority of Arafat to order the Palestinians to stop expressing their grievances.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WATERS: Joining us here in Atlanta, Oded Eran. He is the former Israeli ambassador to Jordan and the chief negotiator for the Israeli delegation.

Welcome, Mr. Ambassador.

ODED ERAN, FORMER ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO JORDAN: Thank you very much.

WATERS: And in Washington, Hassan Abdel Rahman. He's the Palestinian representative to the United States.

You heard what Mr. Carter had to say Mr. Rahman. We have Yasser Arafat with a problem here. Most people agree that he can't just flick a switch and turn off the violence. How difficult is it going to be for him, as "The New York Times" asked today, for Arafat to turn it off?

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REP. TO U.S.: I think President Clinton said something -- President Carter said something very important, also, that as long as there are the advances for the Palestinian people, they have to be expressed somehow.

The problem of the violence is not because the Palestinians expressed frustration, it is because really when they do so they are faced with Israeli military attacks that kill Palestinians and wound Palestinians. So in order, really, to stop those clashes, what we need is for the Israelis to move their heavy equipment and their army from Palestinian towns, villages and streets, and then if the Palestinians express themselves, they will not be expressing themselves in a way against the Israeli military, they will be doing that very peacefully.

But the presence of the Israeli military and the shooting by the Israelis of Palestinians -- like today, for example, not only one was killed, there were three Palestinians killed and more than 60 wounded -- that is what creates the kind of disturbances that we see on the -- on the ground.

WATERS: Would you agree with that Mr. Eran. Were those kinds of weapons that Mr. Rahman refers to around when the rioting broke out near the Temple Mount?

ERAN: The riots that broke out when Palestinians approached Israeli civilians and Israeli soldiers. These Israeli soldiers and civilians were not in Palestinian towns to begin with. They came near there to stop the violence and stop them from reaching Israeli settlements, Israeli civilians and Israeli soldiers.

I think what we are looking for Mr. Arafat is to rein in those organizations that are under his control and will follow his clear signal, if there is a clear signal. And millions of viewers saw Palestinian policeman using firearms. Millions of viewers saw the Tanzim people, who were illegally and still are illegally armed, using live ammunition against Israeli -- Israeli settlers and against Israeli policeman and soldiers.

So this is what we asking. We're not asking that every Palestinian individual who wants to demonstrate peacefully or not will obey Arafat. This is hopefully the optimal situation. But we are asking Arafat to reign in those organizations which obey him, and these are the majority of the demonstrators.

WATERS: Are there any good signs here? We have Yasser Arafat saying we expect an honest and accurate implementation of the Sharm el-Sheikh agreement. Then we have Mr. Barghouti, the head of the Arafat Fatah organization saying the intifada will continue. That is a kind of a challenge, is it not, Mr. Rahman, to Mr. Arafat's authority? Does that bother you?

RAHMAN: Before I answer you, I want to make some correction to the statement that made by Ambassador Eran. First of all, he says that the Palestinians attacked Israelis. Where: in Israeli or on

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Palestinian territory? He's saying that: Oh, they are in not Palestinian territories. Where those soldiers are? Are they on Palestinian territories? Where are Jewish settlements?

(CROSSTALK)

ERAN: They were not in towns. There is an agreement...

RAHMAN: Well, of course there is.

ERAN: ... which we abide by. We are in the worst

(CROSSTALK)

ERAN: We went to the summit in Camp David in order to reach agreement by which we will evacuate Palestinian territories as part of the agreement.

RAHMAN: But Mr. Eran...

ERAN: For one reason or another, Mr. Arafat rejected all the proposals there.

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: No, you are not saying what happened, believe me, because, first of all, Israel did not implement the agreement we signed in Sharm el-Sheikh in February.

(CROSSTALK)

ERAN: Forgive me, I was negotiating with your colleague for months.

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: Are you going to let me finish my statement, or not?

ERAN: Please do.

RAHMAN: OK. So let me finish. There are agreements, which Israel failed to implement. And those are the failed redeployment of Israeli troops from Palestinian territories. Now, the first attack on the Palestinians happened near Haram al-Sharif when the Palestinian demonstrated on Friday on the 29th of September. And...

ERAN: This is to best of my knowledge, in Israel, this is the Temple Mount. And it's in Jerusalem.

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: Is Temple Mount, is al-Haram as-Sharif. And that is occupied Jerusalem.

ERAN: That's in your view.

(CROSSTALK) RAHMAN: But no one recognized it. You did it unilaterally. And all the international community condemned you for doing that.

ERAN: We went to Camp David. We went to Camp David to negotiate.

RAHMAN: So what are you talking about? You killed Palestinians.

(CROSSTALK)

ERAN: I'm sorry. If you are -- if you continue to distort the facts and the truth, I cannot allow you to do this.

RAHMAN: No, I am not distorting.

(CROSSTALK)

WATERS: Excuse me, gentleman, but -- excuse me, gentlemen. We are getting sort of a microcosm of the problem in the Middle East.

ERAN: Absolutely.

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WATERS: When we have a couple of negotiators here arguing over a point, Jerusalem, which apparently was on a track toward being settled after the Camp David summit. And that fell apart. So there is an issue of religion...

RAHMAN: But...

WATERS: ... and nationalism mixed together here. My question to you is...

(CROSSTALK)

WATERS: ... are we ever get going to get past this? You see any -- anything positive in the future? Can there be peace in the region?

ERAN: There can be peace.

RAHMAN: If you allow me -- if you allow me.

ERAN: There can be peace. But the two sides have to take courageous decisions. What we saw in Camp David is an attempt by the prime minister of Israel to walk the extra mile, to make the necessary steps in order to reach an agreement. For whatever reason, whether he was unable or unwilling, Chairman Arafat rejected all the proposals that were made by President Clinton. It came...

RAHMAN: Not by President Clinton. Can I say something?

WATERS: Yes, answer that. Answer that.

RAHMAN: Please. I mean, you know, whenever I say something, he interrupts me.

WATERS: Go ahead. Go ahead. RAHMAN: I hope that you will make this a fair exchange. First of all, that's not totally accurate what Mr. Eran is saying. Jerusalem occupied in 1967. The annexation of Jerusalem was never recognized by the United States or by any other country.

ERAN: You went to negotiate it.

RAHMAN: But this is -- I mean, definitely, but what I am saying, you said that Jerusalem is part of Israel. I'm telling no, because one recognizes your annexation. So when the Palestinians demonstrate in Jerusalem, you shot and killed six Palestinians and wounded 200. That was the beginning of this conflict.

(CROSSTALK)

ERAN: It takes us nowhere. You mutilated two -- two Israeli soldiers beyond any recognition.

RAHMAN: But that's...

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: I am not saying -- Mr. -- I am -- I'm talking about how this conflict initiated. You killed six Palestinian, wounded 200 in demonstrations.

ERAN: This is not how it started.

RAHMAN: This was on the 29th. Now, you are talking about peace proposals made by Israel. All the proposals that were made by Israel are inconsistent with the international legality, with what is required of from us. We will require from you to withdraw from all the occupied territories. You wanted to withdraw from part of the occupied territories. We...

ERAN: A compromise is something which both sides have to agree to.

RAHMAN: You know, I really cannot continue this if you continue to interrupt me.

(CROSSTALK)

ERAN: You cannot speak for a half-an-hour explaining your opposition, which is a distortion

(CROSSTALK)

WATERS: Gentleman.

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(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: No, but I listen to you to say whatever you want to.

(CROSSTALK) WATERS: Gentlemen, we're -- hello, hello, we're on television. We don't have that much time. And nothing will be settled on this score here.

RAHMAN: Yes, but I mean...

WATERS: But what I'm trying to get at here is the international effort to try to find peace in the Middle East between Palestinians and Israelis. We now have the United Nations involved, because Kofi Annan was instrumental in facilitating this meeting in Sharm el- Sheikh. We now have the Arab League meeting on this weekend you. Do you see a greater international participation in this process? And is there, perhaps, a positive sign that peace can be achieved in the Middle East?

Now, without getting into the particulars you've been getting into, try to answer that question.

ERAN: As far as I can see, the international community is very important in helping the two sides reach an agreement. At the end of the day, it is for the two sides to decide how they want to conduct their coexistence. It is a coexistence. And it has to be done peacefully. And it has to be done bilaterally by the two sides.

WATERS: All right.

(CROSSTALK)

ERAN: What it takes is courage, political courage and political vision...

RAHMAN: Can I...

WATERS: Yes, you...

ERAN: And political to do it in a peaceful way. What we have seen in the last three weeks is an attempt to force the issue by force. And my greater accusation against Mr. Arafat is that he taken the wind out of the peace sails in the peace camp in Israel. There are many now who doubt the...

RAHMAN: Can I...

ERAN: ... course that they have taken in their efforts for

(CROSSTALK)

ERAN: And this is something which is really a serious problem.

RAHMAN: Can I say something, sir?

WATERS: Yes, sir, Mr. Rahman, you have the last word -- same question, please. Same question.

(CROSSTALK) RAHMAN: I tell you how we end all of this. The Palestinian people have been living under Israeli military occupation for 33 years. They are denied their freedom, their dignity and their right to live as an independent people. As long as Israel continues to occupy them and to want to impose its will on the Palestinian people by sheer military force, I don't think that peace the possible.

When Israel starts dealing with the Palestinians as its equal, when Israel starts respecting the humanity of the Palestinians, and feel that Palestinian life is equal to Jewish life, then I believe we can make peace.

WATERS: That's a good place to end it. Thank you both for giving us insight inside the process -- a couple of negotiators in this whole peace process. Former the Israeli ambassador to Jordan, Oded Eran, we thank you so much for being here, sir. And Hassan Abdel Rahman in Washington.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

WATERS: We thank you both. Hope to talk to you again. And good luck.

Can Yasser Arafat Stop the Violence in the Middle East? CNN October 17, 2000; Tuesday

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Crisis in the Middle East: Straying from the Path of the Oslo Peace Accord CNN October 16, 2000; Monday







Israeli Knesset Speaker Avraham Burg, Palestinian Representative to U.S. Hassan Abdel Rahman Discuss Middle East Crisis CNN October 15, 2000; Sunday



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CNN

SHOW: CNN SUNDAY MORNING 08:00

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HEADLINE: Israeli Knesset Speaker Avraham Burg, Palestinian Representative to U.S. Hassan Abdel Rahman Discuss Middle East Crisis

GUESTS: Hassan Abdel Rahman, Avraham Burg

BYLINE: Miles O'Brien, Carol Lin

HIGHLIGHT:

Avraham Burg, speaker of the 15th Israeli Knesset, and Hassan Abdel Rahman, the Palestinian representative to the U.S., discusses the Middle East crisis ahead of an emergency peace summit to be held in Egypt.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

MILES O'BRIEN, CNN ANCHOR: For more perspective on the latest developments in the Middle East, we're joined by two guests. Avraham Burg is the speaker of the 15th Knesset. He is in New York. Hassan Abdel Rahman joins us from Washington. He is the Palestinian representative to the U.S.

Welcome to both of you, gentlemen.

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO U.S.: Thank you.

AVRAHAM BURG, ISRAELI KNESSET MEMBER: Thank you very much.

O'BRIEN: Mr. Rahman, I'd like to begin with you. If you had the opportunity to counsel Mr. Arafat going into this summit meeting tomorrow, what would you tell him to do?

RAHMAN: Well, I think he knows what he has to do. Mr. Arafat had asked for an international commission of inquiry to investigate Israeli aggression against the Palestinians in the last two weeks. And he asked Israel to stop all the measures that it has imposed on the Palestinian territories such as the



Israeli Knesset Speaker Avraham Burg, Palestinian Representative to U.S. Hassan Abdel Rahman Discuss Middle East Crisis CNN October 15, 2000; Sunday

closure of the Gaza airport, the borders, the prevention of aid from arriving into Palestinian territories. And definitely, we would like to see the ground paved for ending the cause of this conflict, which is essentially, Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and people.

O'BRIEN: Mr. Burg, if that is what Mr. Arafat were indeed to say, how would you counsel Mr. Barak to respond?

BURG: The first advice to Mr. Barak is go there. Though this summit is not a starter or restarter of the peace process but at least I hope it will become a stopper of the present violence. There are a couple of measures to be taken in order to make this event or this summit a successful one. The first one is Israel will continue to defend its citizens by building walls between us and the Palestinians as long as the other side won't stop the very strange national unity of associating Yasser Arafat with the arch terrorist of the Hamas leagues (ph) released to walk in the streets as walking bombs. The minute he will bring this genie back to the bottle, he can re-become a partner for our peace process.

And therefore, I would say Israel, who always wants peace, and Israel, who always will do its best to defend its soldiers and citizens is really at this moment with all the difficulties to resume the peace talks, if the other side will go back to conversation, to dialogue, to negotiation rather than the road of struggle.

O'BRIEN: Mr. Rahman, some would suggest the peace process, now seven years old, may, in fact be dead. Would you go along with that?

RAHMAN: Well, I'm sure that the peace process has been dealt a very serious blow in the last two weeks, because Israel really unilaterally declared war against the Palestinians and killed over a hundred Palestinians and wounded over 3,000 and deployed its tanks on Palestinian land and took very warlike measures against the Palestinians. So that is not really an environment for peace. That's why I would like to ask Mr. Burg and Mr. Barak to take actions to diffuse this situation by withdrawing their tanks from Palestinian territories. And then the environment will be more adequate to talk about how to solve the problems between us and the Israelis.

O'BRIEN: Is that...

RAHMAN: I don't understand why Israel insists on having its Army and its tanks on Palestinian territories in Palestinian towns and in Palestinian villages shooting at Palestinians.

O'BRIEN: Mr. Burg, is that a non-starter from the Israeli perspective?

BURG: First, everything is a starter as long as the other side is motivated to peace the way ours. But I would like to answer both of your questions. The first one is, Mr. Abdel Rahman knows better than many of us that each and every Israeli soldier who is deployed there in the occupied territories is there out of an agreement between us and the Palestinians of the last seven years from Oslo up until the last Camp David, each and every one of them.

However, when an isolated soldiers is being attacked by mobs like the one slaughtered and lynched two of our soldiers only a couple of days ago, thousands of them enraged by Yasser Arafat there behind the scenes puppeteering his people, there is only one reaction that a soldier can do in order to defend himself, and this is to defend to himself, it's self-defense. And then my question will be to the rest of the world: Where is Mr. Arafat? Why didn't we hear his voice when the mobs lynched these two people? Why was it so that when the Israelis accidentally shot the poor boy there at the junction in Gaza? And I never understand why a father takes his son to a killing zone, but he was there. And the entire nation agonized this thing. And I, as a speaker of the Knesset, really apologize for it. Where is Mr. Arafat? Is he happy with the violence? Can he control the genie?

O'BRIEN: Mr. Rahman...

BURG: And if he cannot control the genie, he cannot be a partner.

O'BRIEN: Mr. Rahman, the question is posed.

RAHMAN: Yes. An isolated mob soldier killed by isolated mob.

Israeli Knesset Speaker Avraham Burg, Palestinian Representative to U.S. Hassan Abdel Rahman Discuss Middle East Crisis CNN October 15, 2000; Sunday

BURG: Where was Mr. Arafat? Where was Mr. Arafat?

RAHMAN: Can you -- I listened to you -- I listened...

BURG: Only one leader you have.

RAHMAN: Where were you -- where were you...

BURG: What did the leader say?

RAHMAN: Where were you and Mr. Barak when your soldiers killed 100 Palestinians?

BURG: On the problem of -- Mr. Rahman...

RAHMAN: I did not hear you apologize for this and express your regret for 100 Palestinian lives. You have not said, "We are sorry."

BURG: Maybe -- I will tell you very carefully. I was there on the podium of the Knesset and in each and every network around the world saying we are ready to put an end to violence immediately...

RAHMAN: You did not say, "I am sorry. We apologize for the killing of Palestinian lives."

BURG: I'm sorry, Mr. Abdel Rahman, but I'm not at all sure that the truth is your guide because you don't know the information you are talking about, especially speaking about somebody like myself who is one of the founders of the peace camp in Israel.

RAHMAN: Well, I know you, and that's why -- I know you, and that's why I am really shocked by what I hear from you this morning. I have always thought...

BURG: You hear from me -- Mr. Abdel Rahman, as much as I...

RAHMAN: Yes, because you are always speaking exactly what other Israelis are saying.

BURG: As much as I admired your previous position as one who really wanted to promote peace, I really urge you now, stop the Palestinian demagoguery and the PR propaganda and go back to the table. If you cannot disassociate yourself from the bin Ladens and the Hamas killers in the streets of Ramallah and Nablus and Gaza, you will never be partners of the...

RAHMAN: Well, you know, that that is not correct and you know that.

BURG: You will never be -- Mr. Abdel Rahman, you will never be partners to the Western world.

RAHMAN: You know that. You, yourself cannot believe this.

(CROSSTALK) O'BRIEN: Gentlemen, gentlemen, gentlemen, we should try to do one at a time here. Mr. Rahman, why don't you respond to Mr. Burg?

RAHMAN: Yes. I think he himself does not believe what he is saying, Mr. Burg, for the very simple reason that if you are attacked by a foreign army in your own homes, what do you do? You just not even have the right to protest? We are protesting with stones while you are using tanks, Mr. Burg. You are talking about agreements having Israeli soldiers on our territory. But you know that Israel has failed to implement the agreements that we signed with Israel to redeploy its forces out of Palestinian territories. That is the source of frustration for Palestinians. Continued occupation for 32 years deprived of their freedom, of their dignity. You know that, Mr. Burg.

O'BRIEN: Gentlemen, gentlemen, let me ask you both, and Mr. Burg, you can begin because it is your turn.

BURG: Thank you.

O'BRIEN: To what extent is this summit perhaps in some ways irrelevant in the sense that what's happening on the streets in the West Bank and Gaza has taken on a shape of its own? And many of those people have such deep-seated emotions. Whatever happens in Egypt may not have any direct impact.

Israeli Knesset Speaker Avraham Burg, Palestinian Representative to U.S. Hassan Abdel Rahman Discuss Middle East Crisis CNN October 15, 2000; Sunday

BURG: I will say the following. Killers and sympathizers of killers cannot play the underdog forever. And Israel will never apologize for being strong defending its interests and defending its citizens. Now at every given moment, Israel is there ready with both of its hands extended: one for peace, one for defense. Decide which one you would like to shake, and that's the kind of reciprocity you'll have from the Israeli side. You want peace, you'll have a full-scale peace. You want a struggle, in a struggle, there are no win-win situation. There is only one winner, and Israeli is determined to be this one winner.

O'BRIEN: Mr. Rahman, it seems as if this is a rock-in-hard-place sort of argument. Peace is difficult but the alternative seems even more painful.

RAHMAN: You know, for the Israelis, if we do not accept their terms for peace, then they will bomb us to submission. That is what I hear Mr. Burg saying: Either accept our terms for peace or we will beat the hell out of you and we will kill you.

BURG: Either finish the terms around the table or the battleground. You want battleground, you'll have battleground.

RAHMAN: That's exactly what you are saying. I want to -- Mr. Burg...

BURG: Do you want a table, the chair is next to me. Come and sit next to me and talk to me, Mr. Abdel Rahman.

RAHMAN: Mr. Burg, I talked to you for several... BURG: Stop the rhetoric and come to talk.

O'BRIEN: Mr. Burg, let Mr. Rahman finish his point.

RAHMAN: I talked to you for seven years and you have failed to implement the agreement that you and I reached. Our people are frustrated by this situation. For 32 years, they are living -- the only people in the world who live in the occupation.

BURG: So am I...

RAHMAN: You, Mr. Burg -- listen to me. I listened to you. Mr. Burg, you should take the high moral ground and ask your government stop oppressing other people.

BURG: Am I to understand that...

(CROSSTALK)

O'BRIEN: Mr. Burg, Mr. Burg, let me ask you this, Mr. Burg.

BURG: Abdel Rahman, am I to understand that violence is a bargaining...

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: This is not violence. This is self-defense.

O'BRIEN: Mr. Burg, can I ask you one quick question.

BURG: Yes, Miles, please.

O'BRIEN: Is Israel prepared to make any additional concessions to meet the Palestinians on these demands?

BURG: We didn't make any pre-conditions to go to Cairo. We want to go there and to put an end to the violence. The minute the violence level is down, we are ready to discuss everything. I cannot tell you that it will be very easier for a peacenik like myself to persuade my constituency that the same good old Arafat is a partner. Maybe we need some patience for this older generation times to be over and to wait for a next generation who will never take the alternative of violence as a first option. We have a lot of patience, we have a lot of perseverance and we have a lot of power. And therefore, we are ready to go both ways. We're just waiting for the other side to understand that Israel is the only democracy, Western democracy in the Middle East will never give up its way of life and its valued Democratic system, period.

O'BRIEN: Mr. Rahman, has the time for any sort of peace process such as we know it past?

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RAHMAN: You know, democracies will not occupy other people. Democracies do not discriminate against other people. Democracies have equal treatment of its people and other people. But your government that claims to be a democracy has oppressed Palestinians for 32 years and denied them their very basic human rights and political rights and their right to live as a free people.

Mr. Burg, you have taken in the past positions supporting ending of the Israeli occupation. Today, I hear you saying something totally different. You are saying...

BURG: I...

RAHMAN: Listen to me. You are saying you are there for many, many years to come. And I assure you that the Palestinian people, if they feel that you do not have any intention to withdraw from Palestine, they will have to resist your occupation like any decent people in the world...

BURG: Mr. Abdel Rahman...

RAHMAN: ... when they are invaded by others...

BURG: ... I admire Yasser Arafat's tyrant democracy, but I will tell you only one thing. The fact that Yasser Arafat is now in Ramallah is because we Israelis took the initiative and we Israelis went all the way with the most reconciliatory prime minister you've ever had.

RAHMAN: So you are so generous, Mr. Burg.

BURG: You'll never find a better government than the one you have today. You want to make peace, make it with this government. I tell you...

O'BRIEN: All right, gentlemen, gentlemen, gentlemen...

RAHMAN: We tried to make it with you and we are ready to make it if you accept the conditions for peace.

O'BRIEN: I'm sorry, gentlemen...

RAHMAN: The conditions for peace are international solutions. You have not accepted that.

O'BRIEN: All right, gentlemen, unfortunately, our time is lapsed. Clearly, we could go on and on in this. And we appreciate you both being with us.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

O'BRIEN: Perhaps some kind of hint of what is in store on Monday in Egypt. Avraham Burg and Hassan Abdel Rahman, thanks much to both of you for being with us CNN SUNDAY MORNING -- Carol.

CAROL LIN, CNN ANCHOR: And clearly a reason why both sides are looking for a fact finding commission to find out how that violence started. Challenges ahead in this emergency summit.

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Palestinian Representative Says Israel Must Change Its Attitude Toward Palestinians CNN October 14, 2000; Saturday



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SHOW: CNN WORLDVIEW 22:00

October 14, 2000; Saturday

Transcript # 00101412V18

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LENGTH: 469 words

HEADLINE: Palestinian Representative Says Israel Must Change Its Attitude Toward Palestinians

GUESTS: Hassan Abdel Rahman

BYLINE: Brian Nelson

HIGHLIGHT:

According to Hassan Abdel Rahman, the peace process is still alive in the Middle East, but the Israelis must bring a different attitude to the table and be willing to work with the Palestinians as equals.

BODY:

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BRIAN NELSON, CNN ANCHOR: And to gauge the sentiment for the summit in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip we're joined now by the Palestinian representative to the United States, Hassan Abdel Rahman, and he is joining us from our Washington bureau. Thank you for joining, sir.

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE U.S.: Thank you.

NELSON: What are you expecting from Monday's summit?

RAHMAN: We hope that the summit, of course, will lead to cessation of Israeli killing of Palestinians. Second, the cessation all the aggression policies that the Israel on the Palestinians in the two weeks such as the closure of the West Bank and Gaza, the closure of the Palestinian airport and also the establishment of an international commission to investigate why is this possible for the violence and for that plagued the region in the last two weeks which led to the killing of over 100 young Palestinians and wounding 3000 of our men and women. Israel declared a war against the Palestinians in the last two weeks.

Palestinian Representative Says Israel Must Change Its Attitude Toward Palestinians CNN October 14, 2000;  
Saturday

NELSON: There is a question in the mind of many people -- Mr. Arafat has said that he will attend the summit on Monday, but he has been accused of either tolerating if not encouraging the violence by his silence. Why have we not heard from this week?

RAHMAN: Well, you know -- it's amazing -- just accusing Palestinians who have just probably have stones and sticks in their hands while Israel is using helicopters and tanks and snipers and sharpshooter...

NELSON: Well we can't forget the death of the two Israeli soldiers as well, sir.

RAHMAN: Well, you know, but there are a hundred Palestinians killed also...

NELSON: Why have we not heard from Mr. Arafat, though?

RAHMAN: You know, you have to view what's the protests on the West Bank in the context of people fighting for their freedom. They are rejecting Israeli occupation. One has to remember that those Israelis are in Israeli towns, villages or cities. They are in Palestinian towns. There are on Palestinian territories and Palestinians are very, very tired of Israeli occupation...

NELSON: In your view, is the peace process still alive or is it dead?

RAHMAN: It can be revived if Israel starts viewing the Palestinians as their partners, as their equal, if they start to view Palestinian life as as precious as Israeli life and stop the actions it has been carrying on against the Palestinians for the last two weeks

NELSON: All right, thank you for your insights. From our Washington bureau, Hassan Abdel Rahman, the Palestinian representative to the U.S.

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Attacked;Meltdown;Presidential Debate The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer October 12, 2000, Thursday



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The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer

October 12, 2000, Thursday Transcript #6874

LENGTH: 9519 words

HEADLINE: Attacked;  
Meltdown;  
Presidential Debate

BYLINE: ANCHOR: JIM LEHRER; GUESTS: GEORGE WILSON; JULIETTE KAYYEM; LARRY JOHNSON; TOVA HERZL; HASAN RAHMAN; JIM HOAGLAND, Washington Post; TRUDY RUBIN, Philadelphia Inquirer; FAREED ZAKARIA, Foreign Affairs Magazine;

CORRESPONDENTS: FRED DE SAM LAZARO; BETTY ANN BOWSER; SUSAN DENTZER; RAY SUAREZ; SPENCER MICHELS; MARGARET WARNER; GWEN IFILL; TERENCE SMITH; KWAME HOLMAN

BODY:

GWEN IFILL: Good evening. I'm Gwen Ifill. Jim Lehrer is off today. On the NewsHour tonight, the apparent terrorist attack on an American warship, Israeli and Palestinian reaction to the latest escalation of violence in the Middle East, excerpts from last night's presidential debate, plus analysis of the candidates' foreign policy positions. It all follows our summary of the news this Thursday.

#### NEWS SUMMARY

GWEN IFILL: A U.S. Navy destroyer was attacked today in Yemen by an apparent suicide bomber. It happened as the ship was docked at the port of Aden. A small boat carrying explosives pulled alongside the U.S.S. "Cole," and blew up. At least five American sailors were killed, 12 were missing, and more than 30 injured. In Washington, President Clinton said if it was a terrorist act, it would not change U.S. policy.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: If their intention was to deter us from our mission of promoting peace and security in the Middle East, they will fail. Utterly. I have directed the department of defendants, the FBI and the State Department to send officials to Yemen to begin the investigation. Secretary Albright has spoken with President Sala of Yemen and we expect to work closely with his government to that effect.

GWEN IFILL: The Yemeni President told CNN the explosion was not the work of terrorists. He said his country does not harbor such elements. We'll have more on this story right after the News Summary. The two major presidential candidates joined in condemning the attack on the "Cole." In Langhorne, Pennsylvania, Governor Bush called it cowardly. In Milwaukee, Vice President Gore said it would not go unpunished.

GOV. GEORGE W. BUSH: First our prayers go to the families. A constant reminder that people wear our uniform make sacrifices. I hope that they gather enough intelligence to figure out who did the act and take the necessary action. There must be a consequence.

Attacked;Meltdown;Presidential Debate The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer October 12, 2000, Thursday

VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE: If it is determined to be the result of a terrorist operation, those responsible should know that the United States will not rest until the perpetrators are held accountable. This is... This is a situation that will bring a response. We will pursue any and all information and leads as to who was responsible.

GWEN IFILL: The candidates spoke as they resumed campaigning after their second debate. We'll have excerpts from that debate, and analysis later in the program tonight. Some of the worst violence yet erupted today between Israelis and Palestinians. A mob killed three Israeli soldiers, and Israeli helicopters struck back. Again, John Irvine of Independent Television News.

JOHN IRVINE: This was the trigger: The murder of Israeli soldiers inside a Palestinian police station in Ram Allah. The Palestinian security forces could not keep a lynch mob of their own people at bay. In a first floor room, the soldiers were beaten and stabbed to death. Their bodies were later dumped out of this window. The Israeli army responded swiftly, moving their tanks into firing positions on the outskirts of town. Minutes later, a combat helicopter stooped and released a missile. The target was the police station where just hours earlier the Israeli soldiers had been killed. Several Palestinians were injured in the attack, a few were lucky to escape death. The Israelis chose other specific targets in Ram Allah, including Yasser Arafat's West Bank headquarters, and Palestinian television and radio stations. The Israelis said their broadcasts had been inflammatory. The attack helicopters were also over the Gaza Strip -- the power base of the Arafat administration. Here Palestinian television shows one missile landing in the harbor at Gaza City. Here, Palestinians reply with anti-aircraft fire. The Israelis have struck at the Palestinian Authority that they accuse of not doing enough to end the violence that has blighted the Holy Land for two weeks now. It is in Ram Allah that the Israeli offensive has been most sustained. As dusk fell over the West Bank town, helicopters were sending in more missiles. The Israelis are calling this a limited strike. The Palestinians, however, are saying it's a declaration of war.

GWEN IFILL: In Washington, President Clinton said the killing of the Israeli soldiers was an act of murder, and he appealed for a cease-fire. He said the alternative to peace is now clear for all to see. We'll have more on this story later in the program tonight. The events in the Middle East helped cause jitters on Wall Street. Analysts said there were new fears of higher oil prices and inflation. The Dow Jones Industrial Average plunged 379 points, or 3.6% to close at 10,034. The NASDAQ Index dropped 93 points, or about 3%, to finish at 3074, its lowest close this year. President Clinton may become the first U.S. leader to visit North Korea. That word came today in a joint communique in Washington. It said Secretary of State Albright would visit the north soon, and the President might follow.

MADELEINE ALBRIGHT: Our policy has been to explore through your diplomacy whether it's possible to remove, over time, the obstacles to a better and normal relationship. This is important to our own security, and to that of friends throughout the Asia Pacific region. It supports the engagement policy of our ally in Seoul, including President Kim Dae Jung's vision of a Korea moving toward permanent reconciliation and peace.

GWEN IFILL: Secretary Albright spoke at the end of two days of talks with North Korea's top military official. Congress sent an auto safety bill to President Clinton today. It won final approval last night. The legislation followed 101 traffic deaths linked to failures of Firestone tires on some Ford vehicles. It includes penalties for automakers who hide flaws and requirements of vehicle rollover testing. The President is expected to sign it. A Chinese novelist and playwright won the Nobel Prize for Literature today. Gao Shing-Zhahn has focused on the struggle for individuality in mass culture. He is the first Chinese to win the prize, but his work is banned in his Communist homeland. He has lived in self-imposed exile in France since 1988. That's it for the News Summary tonight. Now it's on to the attack on a U.S. Warship, new violence in the Middle East, and the candidates debate foreign policy.

FOCUS - ATTACKED!

GWEN IFILL: Spencer Michels begins our look at today's attack on the USS Cole.

SPENCER MICHELS: The navy destroyer USS Cole was on a four-hour stop at what the Navy called the friendly port of Aden in Yemen to refuel when the attack occurred. The ship had come from the Mediterranean Sea, through the Suez Canal, down the red sea. It was on its way to the Persian Gulf.



Attacked;Meltdown;Presidential Debate The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer October 12, 2000, Thursday

About 350 sailors were on board when the explosion ripped a hole about the size of a house in the warship at noon local time. The wounded-- about 30 of them-- are receiving treatment at a Yemen hospital. At the Pentagon today, Defense Secretary William Cohen described the blast.

WILLIAM COHEN, Secretary of Defense: According to an eyewitness account, the explosion occurred when a small boat that was participating in the mooring approached the USS Cole. I want to repeat that we do not yet know the cause of the explosion. If, however, we determine that terrorists attacked our ship and killed our sailors, then we will not rest until we have tracked down those who are responsible for this vicious and cowardly act. The United States is a global power with global responsibilities, and as a result, we face global risks. In the wake of this tragedy, I want to be very clear about one point. We will continue to protect our national interests around the world, in the Middle East, and elsewhere. No one should doubt our resolve to remain a force for peace and for stability, and no one should assume that they can force us to retreat. No one should assume they can attack us with impunity. Force protection is my top priority when I deploy troops, and it's the top priority of every commander. But we know that our vigilance cannot eliminate all risk. In the wake of this tragedy, we have increased the alert level of all of our forces around the world, at home and abroad. The navy has dispatched medical teams and additional security teams to Aden, and British and French officials have offered assistance to evacuate and to treat our wounded. The departments of state and justice have dispatched investigators to learn what was responsible for the blast.

SPENCER MICHELS: Admiral Vern Clark, the chief of naval operations, said he had no reason to think this was anything but a senseless act of terrorism. He showed pictures of the ship.

ADMIRAL VERN CLARK, Chief of Naval Operations: And this is a picture of the damage to the hull, and you can see that it is generally mid- ships and the immediate damaged area is in one of the main engine rooms and in an auxiliary engine area and space. Now this is a close-up of the hull, and the hole in the hull. And you can see that the damage has occurred at the water line. And you can also get a picture of the nature of the damage in the way the metal is bent and so forth. The hole is generally 20 feet high and 40 feet across.

SPENCER MICHELS: The state-of-the-art destroyer, based in Norfolk, Virginia, is equipped with missiles capable of attacking land, sea, and air targets. It's part of a class of warships known as the Arleigh Burke. So far, no one has claimed responsibility for the blast.

GWEN IFILL: For more on today's attack, we are joined by three experts. Larry Johnson was deputy director in the State Department's Office of Counter-Terrorism from 1989 to 1993. He is now a security consultant. George Wilson is a defense columnist for the "National journal," and former defense reporter for the "Washington Post." And Juliette Kayyem was a member of the National Commission on Terrorism. She is now an associate at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

George Wilson, what can you tell us about how this happened?

GEORGE WILSON: Well, it happened in a way which would be very hard for the crew to detect. The small boats are needed for this particular mooring operation, to carry the lines from this destroyer, which is longer than a football field, into the mooring buoys, which are posted around the perimeter of the ship. So there was no reason to suspect that one of these boats, which was assisting the operation and was carrying ropes would be a terrorist inside.

GWEN IFILL: The men on board were helping to tie the ship to the dock.

GEORGE WILSON: The men in the little boat were helping to tie up the ship. So it looked just routine. And suddenly this small boat either rammed or sidled up to the side of the ship and unleashed these explosives. So there was no indication that this was going to be anything but a normal docking. And it was not at a pier, which would have been easier. It was at a floating dolphin they call it, which is like a ramp out in the harbor itself, not in a big pier.

GWEN IFILL: And they use that for refueling?

Attacked;Meltdown;Presidential Debate The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer October 12, 2000, Thursday

GEORGE WILSON: Right. They were going to refuel and then they were going to go on and patrol the Persian Gulf to see what contraband if any was getting into Iraq.

GWEN IFILL: You've covered the Pentagon for years. How would you gauge the U.S. response today?

GEORGE WILSON: I think that they told us what they knew. I think that they're still a little confused as to who did it and how it was done. But I don't have any sense of cover-up or any feeling that they're not coming through with what they know.

GWEN IFILL: They certainly didn't hesitate, Larry Johnson, to say that this was terrorism or to intimate very strongly that this was terrorism. From what you know of this, why would they leap to that conclusion?

LARRY JOHNSON: Well, this marks an unfortunate new milestone in the field of international terrorism. It's the first boat bomb we've had since we've been recording data on it going back to 1968. Because Osama Bin Laden has been making threats about killing Americans, when you go back over the last seven years, he is the only one talking about killing Americans. Boats like this just don't blow up. It's not like someone was smoking a cigarette or cigar and lit off a bunch of jet fuel. So, from this point forward it's an investigation. We should not accuse and then punish someone. We have to collect the evidence and determine who is responsible; and in that regard, the first step, they're going to go over photographic imagery from the satellites to find out, to see where the position of that boat was, to see if they can track that, all kinds of signal intelligence. They're going to talk to people both that are on the scene there as well as that may be in jails here in the United States who might have some connection that can tell them about what was going on. In addition, they're going to look for the forensic evidence. Unfortunately about the bomb scene, a lot of the debris has sunk or it's scattered in the water, but you have residue on the ship. They'll be able to step the type of explosive; they'll be able to tell the size of the explosive.

GWEN IFILL: Juliette Kayyem, let's talk about this whole idea of this being a terrorist target. This is Yemen. Was this a dangerous place for this ship to be? Do we have reason to be worried about it? Were we on sufficient security alert?

JULIETTE KAYYEM: Specifically to Yemen, I don't think that we had any reason to be particularly concerned. That it is in the Middle East and close to Saudi Arabia is relevant, however, given what is going on with the Middle East conflict in the last two weeks. We do have to leave open a possibility it was not terrorism. But if it was, then two things flow from that. Is it specifically related to the events in the Middle East in the last two weeks?

GWEN IFILL: What do you think about that?

JULIETTE KAYYEM: Some sort of Palestinian terrorist group, --

GWEN IFILL: What do you think about that?

JULIETTE KAYYEM: -- or is it a third option which is a sort of distract and destroy. I mean -- did a different totally unrelated terrorist group know that we were so focused on the Middle East at this time that they sort of took it as an opportunity to go after us in an area that we were historically unsuspecting.

GWEN IFILL: So maybe it's not so much when you say there is a connection to maybe what's going on in the Middle East, maybe it's just a question of our eyes were turned elsewhere and not that Palestinians in Yemen, say, were trying to strike out.

JULIETTE KAYYEM: Right. Yemen does not have a large Palestinian population. And it's a very poor country. I think the most significant thing that should occur now in the investigation is going to be the biggest question is going to be how much cooperation are we going to get from the Yemen government. As we learned with the Kobar Towers investigation, we need cooperation from the hosting country. And I think a lot of people in the government felt we didn't get that from Saudi Arabia. We're going to have to interview people in Yemen. Clearly if this small boat took off from Yemen, people in port

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are going to know things. If we don't get full cooperation from the Yemenese government, then it is going to hinder what we know and what we can find out and presumably our prosecution.

GWEN IFILL: George, let's back up a minute. Tell me about the ship. As described, two fellows come up in the boat, put some plastic explosives on their side or whatever they did, blow themselves up and blow this huge hole in the side of the boat. How can that be? How does that happen? Are these ships not that strong?

GEORGE WILSON: Well, the ship is not as strong as a battle ship. There is not 16-inch steel in this Arleigh Burke destroyer, but it is a half-inch thick side of the ship, so it was a very big explosion to penetrate a hole that big. But it would be very normal to suspect that a series of small boats were doing what they were hired to do; namely, help dock the ship. So it was a very cleverly planned operation. It was not something thought of last night. And the next question is, well, how do we protect the ships in the future? And unfortunately I think it will happen again because this is the era of asymmetrical warfare.

GWEN IFILL: I heard you ask Secretary Cohen that very question today at the news briefing. What does that mean?

GEORGE WILSON: Well, if I can't match you gun for gun or ship for ship, I'll find another way to find the chink in your armor. And, attacking a ship covertly like this you don't have to buy an aircraft carrier or a jet fighter; you can make your point and much cheaper and more dramatically now that the world is all wired up together.

GWEN IFILL: Go ahead.

LARRY JOHNSON: There are things you can do to prevent this. It is uncomfortable and inconvenience for the crew but would I rather have the crew inconvenienced than dead. You put out security patrols that inspect those ships. It's like going through a metal detector at the airport. No ship, no boat gets close to a U.S. ship unless it's been screened and determined no explosives on board -- period. Is it an inconvenience for the crew, yes. Is it going to tax the ship and crew? Yes. But I'd much rather have them tired and cranky than dead, because they can go home tired and cranky and get happy. But when they're dead, they go home in a box.

GWEN IFILL: Juliette Kayyem we've come to expect claims of responsibility in cases like this. Should we expect that in this case?

JULIETTE KAYYEM: Actually, claims of responsibility have decreased in the last couple of years with terrorist incidents so it may be that we will never know exactly who did this. I mean, certainly the intelligence, we're going to have to go back from this moment and determine what intelligence we had leading up to this point that could help us in the investigation, and this is going to tax American agencies. We're going to have the FBI, the State Department, the CIA -- a lot of folks over there at this stage, and a lot of information will have to be shared to determine the best route or course for the eventual prosecution if it occurs.

GWEN IFILL: One of the things, obviously, we're hearing they are going to do is investigate. The other thing that both Secretary Cohen and Secretary Albright intimated today is that - and the President -- is that we would strike back.

JULIETTE KAYYEM: Yes, I think we don't know yet if there was any state that sponsored this terrorist incident. I don't think that anyone has that information yet. Certainly if this was state sponsorship, we would clearly be able to attack that state. State sponsorship of terrorism has been decreasing though, and if we take away the last two weeks, a lot of the Arab countries are getting out of the business, especially with the new leadership in the Arab countries. So this may be a rogue group, a group that it would be very difficult to plan a targeted site. I've heard throughout the day, everyone mentioning Osama bin Laden as the sort of, you know, inevitable person that we go on to. And his movement right now, I would say, is probably severely restricted. And we should probably... might start to think of different possibilities.

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GWEN IFILL: George Wilson, what are the possibilities that are open for the United States Government in terms of retaliation?

GEORGE WILSON: Well, it's much easier said than done. Our record in retaliating has not been all that grand. We bombed what we said was a chemical production plant; it may have well have been just a drug plant. So the evidence will have to be gathered and it will have to be very certain to find a linkage. But the problem with today's world is there is no nationality necessarily. It's like a bunch of wild snakes. And to locate which snake is sponsored by whom is really very difficult.

GWEN IFILL: And how long does it take to undertake the kind of investigation you're talking about or make the kind of changes, security changes you're talking about, Larry Johnson?

LARRY JOHNSON: Security changes can go into place tonight. It's very simple to put those security changes in place tonight. The investigation, they could go two or three years or longer without finding out who is responsible. In the case of Pan Am 103, we didn't really get the break in that case until 1990, almost a year and a half after the event. In the case of Dhahran, there is still a lot of suspicion about who was responsible, but no hard proof. So I think trying to retaliate without clear, convincing evidence is a stupid policy. We're better than that. We need to have clear evidence. And as George correctly noted, the retaliation after the bombing of the U.S. embassies in East Africa in August of 1998, it may have made us feel better, but we hit the wrong targets. And if we're going to be a great country, we can't afford do that.

GWEN IFILL: George, a final question, how off guard were we caught by this? How surprised did they all seem to be today at the Pentagon?

GEORGE WILSON: Well, they were astonished. And it is kind of a first, but you cannot do global operations on Navy ships without some risks. And they will tighten security, but we're vulnerable. There's all kinds of things terrorists can do to a great power in a covert way. So they were astonished at what happened... it happened, but they were warning that this is the new ball game and it could happen again.

GWEN IFILL: George Wilson, Larry Johnson and Juliette Kayyem, thank you all very much.

FOCUS - MELTDOWN

GWEN IFILL: Still to come on the NewsHour tonight, renewed fighting in the Middle East and foreign policy as seen by the presidential candidates.

GWEN IFILL: Margaret Warner has the Middle East story.

MARGARET WARNER: The violence between Israelis and Palestinians entered a new phase today as a Palestinian mob murdered three Israeli soldiers, and Israel launched helicopter gunship attacks on Palestinian targets in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak warned of more difficult days ahead.

For perspective, we turn to, Tova Herzl, Minister for Congressional Affairs at the Israeli Embassy in Washington -- she has just been named Israel's ambassador to South Africa -- and Hassan Abdel Rahman, the chief PLO representative in Washington. Welcome to you both. I have, first of all for each of you in chronological order, a quick factual question about what happened today. Why were these three Israelis soldiers at the mercy of this mob?

HASAN RAHMAN: Well, first of all they were taken to a police headquarters for protection. But the crowd was so angry, so furious over the killing of over 100 Palestinians and wounding of 3,000 in the last 12 days, that they were uncontrollable. It is not that they did not want to protect them. But they could not protect them because of the anger of the crowd.

MARGARET WARNER: And what was the Israeli government trying to accomplish by these strikes today?

TOVA HERZL: The Israeli government, anybody who watched the shocking mind-boggling video that we saw of an Israeli soldier being lynched by a Palestinian mob, and the same... I assume that the boy's mother or wife saw that as well, as well as everybody in this country and people who saw the American reaction, from the President down, to the events of today, the United States will not allow

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anybody to get away with it. Israel sent a message; it was a short, limited operation. It was forewarned, to say that restraint should not be interpreted as weakness. Israel will protect its citizens and Israel will protect its soldiers. And the lynching of people by a mob, when they're under police custody, was very, very troubling. We could not allow people to get away with it.

MARGARET WARNER: Now several PLO officials today in the region called this, this Israeli strike a declaration of war. Do you share that view? And, if so, what do you mean by that?

HASAN RAHMAN: First of all, let me say this. There were a hundred Palestinians -

MARGARET WARNER: You're talking about -

HASAN RAHMAN: -- killed in the last two weeks by Israeli snipers, by Israeli sharp shooters and 3,000 were wounded. All are civilians. We did not bomb Mr. Barak's headquarters or the defense minister ministry. Why? Because we felt that we are supposed to be calming down and not the violence and not escalating. I believe Mr. Barak's ill-advised policy borders on a declaration of war. And it will have exactly the negative effect because after killing so many Palestinians, for 14 days, and the Palestinians cannot be bombed into submission -- he has to understand that. The only way to have peace with the Palestinians is by respecting the rights of the Palestinians and not by killing more Palestinians.

MARGARET WARNER: Is this a declaration of war? A whole new phase, the end of the peace process?

TOVA HERZL: You know, these statements ignore the fact that Prime Minister Barak and the government of Israel have been actively engaged in a peace process. Mr. Barak has made offers and concessions, which would have been inconceivable by any other Israeli administration. They would have been inconceivable I think to most of the Palestinian leaders, and certainly to the American authorities. And yet Mr. Barak, because he wanted to break the cycle of violence, because he wanted to promise a better future to our children and to your children, made concessions, which would have been inconceivable. He risked his political future. I think we cannot ignore what he has been willing to do. And we felt that we were this close to achieving peace. And it seems that Mr. Arafat cannot take yes for an answer. Why are we talking about bombing the Palestinians into submission? We were talking about making concessions on strategic issues, on political issues, on historical landmarks, which it would have been inconceivable six months ago. And Mr. Barak was willing to go not the extra inch or the extra foot -- the extra mile. We were this close and Mr. Arafat apparently, I'm not sure why, was not willing to go that extra inch, to go that extra little bit and reach final resolution. Israel has no interest in violence. What interest do we have? If we would have interest in violence, why would we go to make these concessions?

MARGARET WARNER: All right. Well, let me turn around these mutual accusations. Now, there are Israelis who say just as minister Tova Herzl did, that he put this offer on the table and that for some reason Arafat has decided he can get more through violence or that he thinks perhaps as Hezbollah managed to do in Lebanon, that enough resistance, enough fighting, Israel will get tired and leave.

HASAN RAHMAN: I believe that's totally not true for the very simple reason that on the 26th of September, two days before the events, the massacre that Israel committed against the worshipers on Friday afternoon, that's after the visit, provocative visit of Mr. Sharon to the Sharif. We were here negotiating in Washington, because the Americans and the Israelis realized what was offered in Camp David was not sufficient for an agreement. And that's why we were pursuing negotiations. The problem with our partners, the Israelis, that they negotiate with each other -- she is telling us, Ambassador Herzl, that Barak gave more than Netanyahu. But what Barak gave is much less than what the international community set as the basis for reaching an agreement. On Jerusalem, on the territories on the refugees, what Israel offered was unacceptable.

MARGARET WARNER: Okay, but explain, with all due respect, I don't want to rehash the entire peace negotiations but explain to the rest of the world or at least to our viewers, why the absence of agreement on the peace deal means violence.

HASAN RAHMAN: No, we did not initiate the violence. The violence started as follows: Mr. Barak gives a permission to Mr. Sharon to go to Haram al-Sharif, one of the holiest places of Islam with 1,000



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Israeli soldiers guarding him, and declaring that he is there to reaffirm Jewish sovereignty over Haram al-Sharif, which he calls Temple Mount. Now, the next day the Palestinians demonstrate peacefully. Mr. Barak orders his police and kills six Palestinians and wounds 200. That's where the violence started.

TOVA HERZL: You know, I don't think it would be appropriate to have a long historical discussion about the relative sanctity of the Temple Mount -- Haram al-Sharif --to Jews, to Muslims, to other people, but I think the visit of Mr. Sharon to the Temple Mount, I think we're a little beyond using that as an excuse for what happened. I think freedom of religion and freedom of access does not entitle people to veto about the political opinions of one visit or another to the Temple Mount. I also think it does not include burning Joseph's Tomb and turning it into a mosque. So I think we should look at where we are now. May I remind you, and you and the viewers, that Mr. Barak, despite the very, very terrible scenes we saw today, something which is very difficult to forget, of the soldier being thrown out of the window and lynched, and the glee of the crowd, Mr. Barak on this network said "I want to go back to the peace negotiations." To go back and say Mr. Sharon went on the Temple Mount, alleged Temple Mount, I think that that is avoiding the issue of are we willing to go to peace, are we willing to discuss the issues, are we willing to stop the violence? Israel is willing to stop the violence. Israel has no interest in violence. If Israel would have had interest in violence, it would not have made the offers for the concessions which were so far reaching by anybody's standards.

MARGARET WARNER: What will it take to stop the violence?

HASAN RAHMAN: You know, when the Israelis start viewing the human life of the Palestinians as precious as theirs, when they start respecting the Palestinians as their equals and not as their subjects, when Israel starts dealing with the Palestinians not as vanquished people, but as their partners in peace, that's when we will have peace. But as long as the Israelis care about their dead and they do not care about the 100 Palestinians that were killed by Israeli bullets, we will not have peace.

MARGARET WARNER: But what do you think, what will it take to stop this cycle of violence right now?

HASAN RAHMAN: We made it clear from day one. Mr. Barak, withdraw your troops and your tanks from Palestinian territories.

MARGARET WARNER: All right. Let me get an answer to that.

HASAN RAHMAN: Stop shooting at Palestinians and let's have an international commission of inquiry.

MARGARET WARNER: What about those two ideas? Withdraw all Israeli troops from the occupied territories and the international commission?

TOVA HERZL: We are part of... we are part of a peace negotiation. I think what my colleague has just said, my counterpart, is that in order... you have chosen let Israel withdraw, let's determine the final results of the peace process through violence, rather than through negotiation. We were in a process of negotiation. The Palestinian violence stopped the process of negotiation. Now you are saying let's withdraw from the territories, let's do, a, b, c, d, e. Which territories are we talking about? This is a term... You're predetermining...

HASAN RAHMAN: Palestinian territories I'm talking about.

TOVA HERZL: But Israel has withdrawn from the bulk of them.

HASAN RAHMAN: No you have not because...

MARGARET WARNER: Let me ask a factual question here. Are these territories still the subject of negotiation?

HASAN RAHMAN: Yes, but Mr. Barak moved tanks into the entries of the cities and he stationed soldiers at borders. And that's where the points of contact, you know, the Palestinians do not have tanks and do not have vehicles and do not have long-term weapons. They have stones.

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MARGARET WARNER: All right. Let me ask you -

HASAN RAHMAN: Why don't Israel move those troops from there so we have a disengagement and then we can go back to the negotiating table?

MARGARET WARNER: The other issue is this commission. Why is Mr. Barak so opposed to this?

TOVA HERZL: Mr. Barak is not opposed to an investigation under American leadership to find out exactly what happened. And Mr. Barak objects, given our long and unfortunate history with some international institutions for an --

HASAN RAHMAN: Do you have a problem with France?

TOVA HERZL: -- an international commission of inquiry. Mr. Barak has expressed willingness at the very beginning at the outset of this, should American lead this, we would be interested to go along with this.

HASAN RAHMAN: But we want some balance. We want with the United States that's the strategic ally of Israel, have some European countries. What is the problem with that?

TOVA HERZL: Well, you know, I think the United States... it's not my job to justify...

MARGARET WARNER: We're out of time.

TOVA HERZL: I think the United States has given its auspices to the peace process from the beginning.

HASAN RAHMAN: Fine, but for this idea we need balance.

TOVA HERZL: And these auspices have been acceptable to both sides from the beginning of the peace process. I think it's a matter... it's not a matter that we can say for this America is good, for this America...

HASAN RAHMAN: We want America but we want always countries also.

MARGARET WARNER: Mr. Rahman, we have to leave it there. Thank you for coming in.

FOCUS - PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE

GWEN IFILL: Finally tonight, the second of three presidential debates, and to Ray Suarez.

RAY SUAREZ: Almost half of last night's 90-minute session was devoted to foreign affairs. The conversation began with a question on fundamentals from moderator Jim Lehrer.

JIM LEHRER: One of you is about to be elected the leader of the single most powerful nation the world-- economically, financially, militarily, diplomatically, you name it. Have you formed any guiding principles for exercising this enormous power?

GOV. GEORGE W. BUSH: I have. I have. The first question is what's in the best interest of the United States? What's in the best interest of our people? When it comes to foreign policy, that will be my guiding question. Is it in our nation's interests? Peace in the Middle East is in our nation's interests. Having a hemisphere that is free for trade and peaceful is in our nation's interests. Strong relations in Europe is in our nation's interests. I've thought a lot about what it means to be the President. I also understand an administration is not one person but an administration is dedicated citizens who are called by the President to serve the country, to serve a cause greater than self. And so I've thought about an administration of people who represent all America, but people who understand my compassionate and conservative philosophy.

VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE: I see our greatest natural... national strength coming from what we stand for in the world. I see it as a question of values. It is a great tribute to our founders that 224 years later, this nation is now looked to by the peoples on every other continent, and the peoples from every part of this earth as a kind of model for what their future could be. And I don't think that's just the kind of exaggeration that we take pride in as Americans. It's really true. Even the ones that sometimes shake their



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fists at us --as soon as they have a change that allows the people to speak freely, they're wanting to develop some kind of blueprint that will help them be like us more.

RAY SUAREZ: There was broad agreement on many issues, small distinctions made in several others.

GOV. GEORGE W. BUSH: If we're an arrogant nation, they'll resent us; if we're a humble nation, but strong, they'll welcome us. And our nation stands alone right now in the world in terms of power, and that's why we've got to be humble, and yet project strength in a way that promotes freedom.

VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE: I think that one of the problems that we have faced in the world is that we are so much more powerful than any single nation has been in relationship to the rest of the world than at any time in history, that I know about anyway, that there is some resentment of U.S. power. So I think that the idea of humility is an important one.

RAY SUAREZ: But in the midst of Governor Bush's general agreement with the Clinton administration and the vice President over the bombing of Kosovo, the two candidates began to show their contrasts more clearly.

JIM LEHRER: Governor, new question. Should the fall of Milosevic be seen as a triumph for U.S. military intervention?

GOV. GEORGE W. BUSH: I think it's a triumph. I thought the President made the right decision in joining NATO in bombing Serbia. I supported them when they did so. I called upon the Congress not to hamstring the administration, and in terms of forcing troop withdrawals on a timetable, it wasn't in necessarily our best interests or fit our nation's strategy. I am also on record as saying in some point of time, I hope our European friends become the peacekeepers in Bosnia and in the Balkans. I hope that they put the troops on the ground, so that we can withdraw our troops and focus our military on fighting and winning war.

VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE: Maybe I've heard the previous statements wrong, Governor. In some of the discussions we've had about when it's appropriate for the U.S. to use force around the world, at times the standards that you've laid down have given me the impression that if it's something like a genocide taking place or what they called ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, that that alone would not be... that that wouldn't be the kind of situation that would cause you to think that the U.S. ought to get involved with three troops. There have to be other factors involved for me to want to be involved. But by itself that to me can bring into play a fundamental American strategic interest because I think it's based on our values. Now have I got that wrong?

GOV. GEORGE W. BUSH: If I think it's in our nation's strategic interest, I'll commit troops. I thought it was in our strategic interests to keep Milosevic in check because of our relations in NATO, and that's why I took the position I took. I think it's important for NATO to be strong and confident. I felt like an unchecked Milosevic would harm NATO. And so it depends on the situation, Mr. Vice President.

RAY SUAREZ: The two candidates supported nearly all the major American military actions of the last 20 years. But again and again they returned to the whens, and whys, of American intervention.

GOV. GEORGE W. BUSH: I thought the best example of a way to handle a situation was East Timor, when we provided logistical support to the Australians, support that only we can provide. I thought that was a good model. But we can't be all things to all people in the world, Jim. And I think that's where maybe the Vice President and I begin to have some differences. I'm worried about over committing our military around the world. I want to be judicious in its use. You mentioned Haiti. I wouldn't have sent troops to Haiti. I didn't think it was a mission worthwhile. It was a nation building mission. And it was not very successful. It cost us a couple billions of dollars and I'm not sure democracy is any better off in Haiti than it was before.

VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE: Like it or not, we are now...the United States is now the natural leader of the world. All of the other countries are looking to us. Now just because we cannot be involved everywhere, and shouldn't be, doesn't mean that we should shy away from going in anywhere. And we

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have a fundamental choice to make. Are we going to step up to the plate as a nation, the way we did after World War II, the way that generation of heroes said, okay, the United States is going to be the leader -- and the world benefited tremendously from the courage that they showed in those post-war years.

GOV. GEORGE W. BUSH: I'm not so sure the role of the United States is to go around the world and say this is the way it's got to be. We can help. And maybe it's just our difference in government, the way we view government. I mean I want to empower people. I want to help people help themselves, not have government tell people what to do. I just don't think it's the role of the United States to walk into a country and say, we do it this way, so should you.

RAY SUAREZ: And now to assess all this are three foreign affairs columnists: Jim Hoagland of the "Washington Post," Trudy Rubin of the "Philadelphia Inquirer," and Fareed Zakaria, managing editor of "Foreign Affairs" Magazine and contributing editor of "Newsweek.."

Well, Jim Hoagland, after last night's confrontation, do you come away with a pretty good idea of what a Gore foreign policy is and what a Bush foreign policy is?

JIM HOAGLAND: I think it was a very informative exchange. I think we had a sense that both of these men are internationalists, they're both committed to an American presence in the world, and using American power to defend national interests. I think in the excerpts that you've just shown, you do get a sense that Vice President Gore has a somewhat more optimistic view of history and of the use of American power abroad to change things. And he's more willing to be engaged in different places. Whereas, Governor Bush sounded a more traditional Republican theme of using power really only when you really have to, and then using it in a big way.

RAY SUAREZ: Trudy Rubin, what did you make of last night's confrontation?

TRUDY RUBIN: I was really surprised that the differences between the two men didn't come out more strongly. In fact, given that Governor Bush's probable future national security advisor Condoleezza Rice, if he's elected, has said that we should not be 911 for the world, I was surprised that the Governor agreed with practically all of the interventions that were listed for him by the moderator. And the only one he didn't, Haiti, was not really nation building as a domestic intervention to keep refugees off of our shores. So it's still not clear to me what the Governor's principle is for intervention, and I thought that Vice President Gore also muddled his thesis, and in a sense, didn't sound- that0 different from Governor Bush.

RAY SUAREZ: Finally, Fareed Zakaria.

FAREED ZAKARIA: First I think the prize should go to Jim Lehrer for having that extraordinary exchange on national television. It was probably the most informative exchange about foreign policy that I've seen in a presidential campaign for a decade. I think if Lehrer won, the runner up decisively was Bush because his answers were simple, direct, tough, straightforward. Vice President Gore seemed oddly sort of wishy-washy. He went into long historical asides. There was something almost tentative, oddly tentative about a man who knows so much about foreign policy, whereas Bush came across much firmer, I thought, and had a sort of simple commonsensical line about most of the interventions, most of the issues that were being discussed. Gore seemed almost on the defensive, occasionally agreeing occasionally being slightly different but Bush set the agenda, even on foreign policy and that's remarkable.

RAY SUAREZ: Were there turning points in the conversation where you heard things that just didn't match your knowledge of various international situations or where the candidates seemed not to understand all that was involved in assessing?

FAREED ZAKARIA: No, I thought it was a fairly intelligent discussion in that sense. I didn't think there were any real gaffes on either side. I think as Jim Hoagland said, they were true to form in the sense that Bush represented more the kind of hard headed Republican school, and Gore seemed a little bit more values-based and somewhat more optimistic or idealistic. But basically it was an intelligent discussion with a very broad area of agreement.

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RAY SUAREZ: Trudy Rubin when the conversation moved away from the very easily grasped, do we send troops, do we not send troops sort of conversation to things like the use of international financial institution, the granting of foreign aid, did the conversation take a turn for you? Did it become more diffused, more incisive?

TRUDY RUBIN: No, I don't think... There was talk about reforming the IMF, but nothing specific was discussed. There were generalities thrown out on foreign aid. But actually just to come back to the question of intervention, I mean what surprised me a lot is that there should be, if you take what the advisors say, real differences between these two men. And the question is what do you do about intervention in the murky areas? And that's something that was never illuminated. Neither man talked about the role of the United Nations, whether there should be support for any kind of standing force or standing units. There was very vague talk about regional groups and Governor Bush talked about Nigerians going into Rwanda, or being used in a situation like Rwanda which was never in the cards. Nigerians would just be used in West Africa, if then. So nothing about those many cases of small wars, which are going to come up in the future, and who is supposed to do the dirty work.

RAY SUAREZ: Jim Hoagland do you agree with Trudy Rubin that this is an area of high contrast where we didn't get to see that on display?

JIM HOAGLAND: Well, I think both men achieved the objectives they set out and that affected to some extent what they were able to do. Vice President Gore, I think, succeeded in reducing his negatives picked up from the first debate, and Governor Bush certainly showed a command of foreign affairs that I think surprised a lot of people. He dealt well with general themes. He dealt well with the ideas that put Gore on the defensive on Russia and on intervention, and that surprised people because Governor Bush had been mugged on a foreign policy quiz journalistically earlier in the campaign. The one surprising moment for me was when Governor Bush started talking about debt relief for third world countries. This is not a traditional Republican theme. And I think what he was trying to do there and succeeded to some extent, was to show that he is a different kind of Republican; that he is a compassionate person. He did not lay out, nor did Vice President Gore lay out, any specifics on that. Neither of them have really addressed in the campaign the bit changes you have to make in international financial institutions before you can have effective debt relief. But at least the Governor was trying to say, I'm different on this score. And I think that Vice President Gore didn't really respond on a number of those points. The one area that I thought Vice President Gore could have done better in, too, was in drawing the contrast on intervention in Bosnia, where he asked a question. Governor Bush responded really with his support for Kosovo, rather than on the question of intervention in Bosnia in the early 90's, when Dick Cheney was the Secretary of Defense, and went along with a non-intervention policy. I thought that the Vice President could have done a better job perhaps in nailing that down.

RAY SUAREZ: There was also an intimation, or appeared to be, perhaps in the press of answering the questions they didn't clarify this enough, the Governor seemed to imply that there were a lot of Americans in both Kosovo and Bosnia and that the United States was carrying the weight almost on its own, and this didn't get clarified. Trudy Rubin?

TRUDY RUBIN: I think that's a very interesting point because it brings me to what I thought was one of the more interesting phrases that came up in this debate, and it was humility. Governor Bush talked about America needing to have more humility. That I think comes from something that General Brent Scowcroft said during the Republican Convention here in Philadelphia about America being seen as too arrogant and too unilateral. And I would I have loved to have seen that fleshed out because if the Republicans are not interested in a unilateral, an arrogant America, what exactly does that mean in terms of working with allies? You brought up troops in Bosnia and Kosovo. If America would pull out its troops, which are less than the Europeans have there, then the Europeans would be extremely unhappy. If America went forward with national missile defense, the Europeans would be unhappy. They're unhappy about non-payment of U.N. dues. When Governor Bush talked about humility, a theme picked up by the Vice President, I really would have loved to know what he meant by a more humble America being required.

Attacked;Meltdown;Presidential Debate The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer October 12, 2000, Thursday

RAY SUAREZ: Fareed Zakaria, did you take note of the use of humility and the agreement by the Vice President?

FAREED ZAKARIA: I did. It was one of many areas where they agreed. But again I think what was interesting that Bush set the agenda. And what he said I think Trudy is right, was quite interesting because it isn't a traditional Republican theme, certainly not in Congress. Congress is failing unilaterally, certainly on the Republican side more so than the Democratic side. But this I think comes from his father and his father's administration. If you look at the Bush administration, it was a very multilateral foreign policy. It was a foreign policy that dealt with allies all the time, consistently, engaged them, Jim Baker managed to assemble that extraordinary coalition in the Gulf War. In fact Clinton used to sort of parody Bush for spending time in the White House telephoning his buddy, Helmut Kohl and people like that. But I think that there is something there. George Bush -- George W. Bush seems to believe that the Clinton administration has been too arrogant, too assertive in sort of trumpeting America's economic might, trumpeting America's military might. The Secretary of State has called the United States the indispensable nation. The Secretary of Treasury has gone around to countries like Japan and lectured them on how they should run their economies. And I think there is a sense in the Bush camp that this has been counterproductive and that given America's extraordinary power in the world, one of the key dangers is producing a backlash to that power. So I think it's a more general feeling than one directed at any particular policy, but I do think it derives from the elder Bush.

RAY SUAREZ: Did you see any indication, Jim Hoagland, that a George W. Bush administration would be less interventionist, given his stated support for many of America's overseas activities in the last 20 years, even while he was saying I don't want to be the world's policeman?

JIM HOAGLAND: Not much. There were indications that he would try to put pressure on the Europeans to do more in the Balkans, although they're doing about 80% of the financing and the majority of the troops in the Balkans are now Europeans, of course. I don't think he would preside over a retreat from abroad, and I think the real importance of this whole campaign and the debate last night is that we see that there is no strain, no important strain of isolationism in the American politics today.

RAY SUAREZ: Guests, thank you all very much.

RECAP

GWEN IFILL: Again, the major stories of this Thursday: A U.S. Navy destroyer was attacked today in Yemen by an apparent suicide bomber. At least six American sailors were killed. And a Palestinian mob killed three Israeli soldiers. Israel struck back with helicopter attacks. We'll see you online and again here tomorrow evening with Shields and Gigot, among others. I'm Gwen Ifill. Thank you and good night.

LOAD-DATE: October 13, 2000





President Clinton Raises Issue of Moving U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem CNN July 28, 2000; Friday







Clinton Sends Message to Israelis, Palestinians CNN July 28, 2000; Friday



President Clinton Raises Issue of Moving U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem CNN July 28, 2000; Friday

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THE CAMPDAVID TALKS

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BYLINE: DAVID MAKOVSKY 1

BODY:

THE SEEDS OF FAILURE at Camp David were planted before the summit began. Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat was unwilling to make the concessions necessary for an agreement, and the reason he was unwilling was that he hadn't adequately prepared his public.

The collapse of the summit last week illustrates the dangerous consequences faced by a leader who fills his public with unrealistic expectations and is then boxed in by those expectations. In short, this is what happens when a leader does not lead.

President Clinton, in some revealing comments last Tuesday at the White House, described Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak as a person of "particular courage, vision, and understanding of the historical importance of this moment," while making only scant mention of Arafat's efforts.

Asked about this disparity, Clinton replied, "I think it is fair to say that at this moment in time, maybe because Israelis had been preparing for it longer, maybe because Israelis thought through it more, that the prime minister moved forward more from his initial position than Chairman Arafat, particularly surrounding questions of Jerusalem." He noted Barak did not come to Camp David "to play it safe with his political future."

Well-timed leaks in the Israeli press revealed Barak's negotiating positions, including the ceding of up to 94.5 percent of the West Bank and permitting the return of some 100,000 refugees to Israel and perhaps up to 500,000 refugees to the West Bank, along with the uprooting of 40,000 Jewish settlers.

President Clinton Raises Issue of Moving U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem CNN July 28, 2000; Friday

In contrast, there were no public indications in the Palestinian press of any potential Palestinian compromises. Instead, Palestinian officials kept saying that they expected 100 percent of the West Bank; their "concession" had been their very willingness to recognize the existence of the Jewish state in the landmark 1993 Oslo accord.

For example, at a conference last month in East Jerusalem, the Arafat-appointed mufti of Jerusalem (the official in charge of Islamic religious affairs), Ikrima Sabri, issued what the Palestinian press hailed as a "historic document," which stated, "we believe in the sanctity of Jerusalem and what is around, acknowledging our religious and historical right to our holy city and affirming our right of complete sovereignty over every speck of dirt in it." Faisal Husseini, the Palestinian Authority official who heads the Jerusalem affairs portfolio, made sure nobody missed the point. He is cited in Al-Hayat al-Jadida as stating that the document has the status of a religious fatwa or edict.

This hard-line approach wasn't just a pre-game tactical move. During the summit, Washington-based PLO representative Hassan Abdel-Rahman went on record as saying: "We will not accept any proposal that gives us less than full sovereignty over East Jerusalem. Without full sovereignty, there will be no deal."

Just a few days ago, he indicated to The Washington Post that "the margin for compromise is absolutely nil."

Given this kind of rhetoric, it's unsurprising that a poll of Palestinians conducted last month by the Jerusalem Media Communications Center showed that 62 percent rejected out of hand a proposal for a compromise agreement on Jerusalem under which the Palestinians would assume "total responsibility over religious sites" and less-than-total sovereignty over East Jerusalem. Such numbers illustrate the vicious circle created by leaders who are trapped by the false expectations that they themselves create in the public imagination.

Like Arafat, Barak also faced domestic pressures, but unlike Arafat, he did not box himself in with maximalist demands coming into the summit. To the contrary, he engaged in a taboo-shattering discussion on a variety of tough issues, foremost among them Jerusalem. One could argue that Barak's flexibility provides hope that common ground can eventually be found. But as he likes to say, it takes two to tango.

There will be competing pressures on both Barak and Arafat to harden their stances in the post-summit period. Some constituencies will insist on assurances that concessions won't be made in the future. In the case of Barak, some of his governing coalition partners, and perhaps even the opposition Likud, will seek to extract a price for resurrecting Barak's disintegrated coalition. That price will be getting Barak to forswear some of the tentative concessions made at Camp David.

Pressure will also mount on Arafat to unilaterally declare a Palestinian state in September, which could trigger a deterioration of relations and even violence. It was therefore very important that President Clinton last week called on all parties to avoid unilateral actions, thereby signaling to Arafat that the United States will not recognize a Palestinian state if it is not the product of negotiations.



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There is no alternative to negotiations but a bleak future for both Israelis and Palestinians. Geography is stubborn, and no one can choose his neighbors. Negotiation requires both compromise and leadership.

Arafat should realize that leaders need to lead and not follow.

David Makovsky, formerly executive editor of the Jerusalem Post, is a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and a contributing editor to U.S. News & World Report. This appeared in The Washington Post.

LOAD-DATE: July 31, 2000

Mideast talks collapse Deseret News (Salt Lake City) July 25, 2000, Tuesday







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BYLINE: Rudi Bakhtiar, Andy Jordan, Peter Humi, Gary Tuchman, Andrea Koppel, Rusty Dornin, Rebecca MacKinnon, Tom Haynes, Catherine Bond, Elsa Klensch, Bruce Morton.

HIGHLIGHT:

First, a supersonic Air France Concorde jet crashes just minutes after taking off near Paris, killing at least 113 people. Next, young dot.com interns of Silicon Valley get some hands-on experience in the field. Then, recent power cuts in Kenya cause some citizens to cry out. Finally, Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush picks a running mate.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

ANNOUNCER: Seen in classrooms the world over, this is CNN NEWSROOM.

RUDI BAKHTIAR, CO-HOST: It's Wednesday here on NEWSROOM. Welcome. I'm Rudi Bakhtiar.

ANDY JORDAN, CO-HOST: I'm Andy Jordan. We have a lot of the world to cover today. Let's get started.

BAKHTIAR: A tragedy in the air near Paris tops today's news.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SID HARE, PILOT/WITNESS: It was a sickening sight, and when it hit, just a huge fireball.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

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JAKE ROSENBERG, YAHOO! INTERN: They give me a project that I can work on it, and I feel like a real developer.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

JORDAN: "Business Desk" checks in on the dot.com interns of Silicon Valley.

BAKHTIAR: Next stop Kenya, where recent power cuts have some citizens crying out.

JORDAN: "Chronicle" gives us a lesson in "Democracy in America" as Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush picks a running mate.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

RICHARD CHENEY (R), VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: Governor Bush is seeking not only to win an election, but also to lead our nation.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAKHTIAR: Today we report on a first-of-its-kind tragedy. A supersonic Air France Concorde jet crashed just hours after taking off near Paris. At least 113 people died both on board and on the ground after the jet slammed into a hotel complex. What makes this accident different from others? No Concorde had ever crashed in the plane's 30-year history. Until yesterday, there were 14 such jets operating.

Most of those on board the plane which crashed were German tourists heading for New York City where they were to board a cruise ship. The plane was just minutes into its 3 1/2-hour flight at an altitude of only several hundred feet when it went down, just a short distance from Charles de Gaulle Airport north of Paris.

Peter Humi is there and has this report.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

PETER HUMI, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): The Concorde had taken off from Paris' Charles de Gaulle Airport. Witnesses said the supersonic jet seemed to have trouble maintaining altitude before slamming into a hotel in a huge ball of flame.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE (through translator): The plane was on fire. There was a lot of smoke. Practically all of the undercarriage was on fire.

HUMI: There were no survivors on board the aircraft. The hotel building was destroyed. Witnesses spoke of seeing a long trail of flame from one of the jet's engines even before the plane had left the runway.

Among the witnesses to the crash, a pilot for Federal Express.

HARE: The nose pitched straight up in the air and the airplane just started rolling over and backsliding down toward the ground. At that point where the crash site was, it was probably two miles from me and I couldn't see the hotel it's reportedly crashed into. But it was a sickening sight.

HUMI: A spokesman for Air France said the plane had been chartered to a German luxury cruise line for the 3 1/2-hour flight to New York. The passengers were due to begin a two-week holiday aboard the MS Deutchland, cruising down the Americas as far as Ecuador.

Hundreds of firemen, police and medics from Charles de Gaulle Airport reached the crash site within minutes, and a makeshift field hospital was set up. The bodies of some of the passengers were placed in a temporary morgue in nearby buildings, including an adjacent hotel building which narrowly escaped being hit by the crashing plane.

Air France has now grounded its remaining five British-French- built Concorde pending the results of a full crash investigation. The airline said the crashed plane had just been closely inspected four days ago. It had received a complete overhaul last September.



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Peter Humi, CNN, Paris.

(END VIDEOTAPE) BAKHTIAR: So what is a Concorde exactly? The technological marvel was designed to fly above the jet stream at 13,050 miles or just over 2,100 kilometers per hour. Tickets can cost more than \$9,000 and the Concorde cuts a transatlantic flight time almost in half. Only British Airways and Air France operate the plane. And for some who've flown it, the Concorde is the closest they'll ever get to space.

Gary Tuchman looks at the Concorde's past and future.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

GARY TUCHMAN, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): It is majestic and fast. The supersonic Concorde flies twice the speed of sound at an altitude of about 55,000 feet. On a clear day, a passenger can see the curvature of the Earth.

At one time, supersonic transport was thought to be the wave of the future. No longer.

MICHAEL GOLDFARB, FORMER CHIEF OF STAFF, FAA: This plane is approaching its life limits. There hasn't been quite the market, as you know, for the supersonic that they originally envisioned. So it's questionable about the future life of the Concorde, whether they'll reinvest in it and keep it flying.

TUCHMAN: The first Concorde test flight took place in France in March 1969 amid hopes the supersonic revolution was under way. Its first official passenger flight was in January 1976, an Air France flight from Paris to Dakar to Rio de Janeiro. At one time, 16 airlines expressed interest in ordering Concorde, but only two airlines did: Air France and British Airways. Fourteen Concorde were built. This crash means 13 are left.

GOLDFARB: Concorde is the icon of modern safe air travel. It's an amazing aircraft. Air France is a very good aviation company. The French authorities are very good in their oversight of their industry.

Concorde is a world unto its own, and the suppliers are great. And parts aren't so much a problem.

TUCHMAN: The only regularly scheduled service by both Concorde- equipped airlines is between Paris and New York, and London and New York. At one time, there was also regular service in the U.S. to Washington and Miami.

This past fall, the Boeing company withdrew from a research group studying a new supersonic jet because of the cost.

Concorde have had emergency landings before. And just this week, British Airways grounded a Concorde after cracks were detected in the wing surfaces.

CAPTAIN BRIAN WARPOLE, FMR. CONCORDE PILOT, BRITISH AIRWAYS: Concorde has a wonderful, wonderful safety record, and it's been scrutinized by all the certifying authorities who have looked at Concorde from every angle and every aspect. And they have found it totally safe both in design and manufacture.

GOLDFARB: Aircraft can fly 30, 40, 50 years if they're properly maintained. And maintenance is really the key to make sure that those cracks or those small six millimeter cracks they found on the British airplanes are in fact fixed.

TUCHMAN: The fact is, there has never been a fatality on a supersonic Concorde -- until now.

Gary Tuchman, CNN, Atlanta.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

JORDAN: In today's headlines, after 15 days of negotiations, the Camp David summit ended without an agreement between Israelis and Palestinians, the main sticking point: Jerusalem. Yasser Arafat, head of the Palestinian Authority, rejected a U.S proposal that included Palestinian sovereignty over parts of

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the Holy City. Despite the disappointing outcome, U.S. President Bill Clinton said significant progress was made during the talks, opening the way toward a future peace agreement.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

ANDREA KOPPEL, CNN STATE DEPARTMENT CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Even before the official motorcades began rolling out of Camp David, the finger-pointing had begun. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, early Tuesday morning in a note to President Clinton, saying Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak's position on Jerusalem made further negotiations pointless.

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE FOR U.S.: Mr. Barak wanted to have Israeli-Jewish sovereignty over Haram al-Sharif and over other places in Jerusalem, which is unacceptable -- neither to the Palestinians nor to the Arabs.

KOPPEL: But Prime Minister Barak said Israel had already made generous concessions regarding Palestinian claims to East Jerusalem, while it was Yasser Arafat who refused to compromise.

EHUD BARAK, ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER: I emphasize that it takes two to tango. We cannot impose it upon them. We are ready. And if a partner will be, too, there will be peace.

KOPPEL: In a statement released when the summit ended, all three parties noted the negotiations had been "unprecedented in both scope and detail," and pledged to "continue their efforts to conclude an agreement" on all the core issues as soon as possible.

SAEB EREKAT, CHIEF PALESTINIAN NEGOTIATOR: The prospect for an agreement on all permanent status issues after the Camp David summit are stronger than any time before in the last almost nine years of negotiations.

KOPPEL: But a senior U.S. official indicated the U.S. would not be willing to host another peace summit unless there was a change in the as yet unwavering Palestinian position on Jerusalem.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

JORDAN: Well, no doubt many of you are struggling over the tortuous process of picking a career. Well, before you decide, here's some food for thought. Ever since the Internet burst onto the scene in the mid '90s, there seems to be a need for computer programmers and analysts. In fact, employment in the computer industry is projected to grow 117 percent between 1998 and 2008, making it the fastest growing industry.

And what better way to see if the computer business is for you than to get some hands-on experience in the field, especially if it comes with some very enticing perks.

Rusty Dornin reports.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

RUSTY DORNIN, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Robert Spanos is working at IBM this summer on future applications for the Linux computer operating system. He's 16.

ROBERT SPANOS, IBM INTERN: I am a fanatic about computers.

DORNIN: Spanos and other high school and college interns often make more than \$15 an hour at high-tech firms with benefits and even, in some cases, stock options. A shortage of technological talent has companies vying for potential employees, some as young as 14.

ZOE HARTE, YAHOO!: We wouldn't hire you as an intern if we wouldn't consider you as full-time employee, and they're told that up front.

DORNIN: Jake Rosenberg has been working four summers at Yahoo! since he was in high school.

ROSENBERG: They give me a project, and I can work on it, and then I feel like a real developer.

DORNIN: Hip is what's happening in the dot.com world, so companies like Big Blue try harder.

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JANE HARPER, IBM: These are the students that would never have thought about coming to IBM, and that's who we were looking for. We were looking for those students that just were a notch above the rest and were thinking about -- they were going to a cool -- quote, "cool" company, a start-up company, and we had to attract them with something special.

DORNIN: Something special is Extreme Blue, the research center where the first hard disk was developed in 1954. Roy Paterson has been working on a pager that lets you know when someone you know is near.

ROY PATERSON, IBM PATERSON: To figure out what sort of new-age services we can provide for, say, cell phones with GPS capability or Palm Pilots with some sort of location tracking.

DORNIN: And there are the perks their parents never dreamed of.

SU-I LU, IBM INTERN: Obviously, the free housing, and we also get, you know, weekend trips to, like, Great America or like Yosemite or the ballpark.

DORNIN: All work and no play does not a high-tech firm make, an environment designed to produce the magic words.

ROSENBERG: Hopefully we'll graduate in May, cross my fingers, and hopefully we'll be back here full time.

DORNIN: The payback these companies are hoping for.

Rusty Dornin, CNN, Almaden, California.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BAKHTIAR: "Worldview" whisks us to Africa, Asia and North America to look at business trends and techniques. These days, there are awards for everything: best song, best movie, even best clothes. We look back at a recent award ceremony honoring designers. And while style is on the fast track, electricity is slowing down, at least in Kenya: Find out how power cuts are bringing dark days to small business. And a Korean cultural renaissance hits China.

JORDAN: "Worldview" gets going in northeastern Asia. We saw in recent weeks the opening of the traditionally isolated North Korea. Its leader, Kim Jong-il, hosted a summit with his counterpart from South Korea. In the 1970s and '80s, North Korea's only significant allies were China and the Soviet Union. When the U.S.S.R. collapsed in the early '90s, North Korea was left with only one real ally: China. But North Korea found itself increasingly on its own when China established full diplomatic relations with South Korea in 1992.

As Rebecca MacKinnon reports from one town in China, the country seems eager to embrace Korean culture in general.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

REBECCA MACKINNON, CNN BEIJING BUREAU CHIEF (voice-over): The bride may be wearing white, but this happy though slightly nervous couple observes many important rituals of a traditional Korean wedding. The two families now joined in marriage are part of more than 2 million ethnic Koreans who've lived in China's Northeast for generations.

"Thanks to the Communist Party's good ethnic policies," says the groom's father, "our children will be able to pass on our traditional way of life."

In the city of Yanji, an hour from the North Korean border, more than half of all people are ethnic Korean. They speak Korean, eat Korean food, hang Korean signs over their shops along with Chinese characters, and buy music performed by South Korean pop stars. At the Yanbian No. 1 High School, classes are all taught in Korean. This may be part of China, but Chinese is taught here as a second language.

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(on camera): The students at this elite, ethnic, Korean high school are benefiting from a Korean cultural renaissance in China that started after Beijing normalized relations with South Korea eight years ago.

(voice-over): The school principal says a number of students get scholarship money from South Korea. Almost all graduates go on to college.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Chip off the old block.

MACKINNON: Some will come to this grassy campus for an internationalized education at the Yanbian University of Science and Technology, funded largely by money from South Koreans and ethnic Koreans living in the United States and Canada. Founder Chin Kyung Kim is a Korean-American professor dedicated to helping fellow Koreans in this region.

PROF. CHIN KYUNG KIM, YANBIAN UNIV. OF SCIENCE AND TECH.: Because of this university, our Korean minority have the hope for the university educations. So that means, also, the Korean culture is in revival.

MACKINNON: Evidence of that revival isn't hard to find in Yanji. Just go to the park on a Sunday where traditional Korean song and dance looks to be in no danger of dying out.

Rebecca MacKinnon, CNN, Yanji, China.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

TOM HAYNES, CO-HOST: The heat is on in Kenya, our next destination. Kenya is a country on Africa's eastern coast bordering the Indian ocean. It also sits right on the equator. Despite its close proximity to water, much of Kenya suffers from an extremely dry climate. This season, conditions are so poor that Kenyan leaders have made drastic power cuts. The rationing has hurt small business and caused a job shortage. Authorities blame the power cuts on the weather, while others blame the government, citing poor planning and corruption.

Catherine Bond tells us what's generating all the debate.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

CATHERINE BOND, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Drought, famine, poverty and power rationing, Kenya's president, Daniel Arap Moi, says Kenya is facing its worst crisis ever. The new power cuts alone estimated by his government to cost Kenya's economy at least \$100 million U.S. a month in lost business. President Moi blames what he's called the "dry spell" for leaving hydroelectric dams empty.

DANIEL ARAP MOI, KENYAN PRESIDENT: I am not a rainmaker. No Kenyans are responsible for the weather.

BOND: But his critics think differently.

WILFRED KIBORO, FED. OF EMPLOYERS: I think it's the government's fault. I think just blaming the weather, I think it's being dishonest. I think drought situations are not unknown in this part of the world, although perhaps the drought this year is much more severe than it has been in the past. But I think it all boils down to planning. And I think there has been extremely poor planning on the part of the government.

BOND: Charges of poor planning and alleged corruption. For years, Kenya's Energy Ministry was headed by one of the president's closest friends, Nicholas Biwott, seen here on the left, and named recently in a government-authorized report on public corruption tabled in Parliament.

Demanding privatization and transparency, Western donors held back funds crucial to developing the energy sector. Now it will be another year before additional sources of electrical power are running, meaning massive job losses and increased hardship.

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE: This thing will have a lot of impact on the purchasing of power, on the people in the Uakari (ph), the farmers, the people who use power to do their small businesses. So, purchasing power, you go down.

BOND: An impact at a time when Kenya's government says 47 percent of its people in the countryside and 29 percent in the towns cannot afford to eat enough. And according to President Moi's recent appeal to the international community for emergency food aid, almost 3 million Kenyans are absolutely destitute.

Catherine Bond, CNN, Nairobi.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BAKHTIAR: Next up, fashion's foremost strut their stuff. We go to center stage to the American Fashion Awards for a glimpse into glamour and big business. Seems technology and a new generation are having an impact on haute couture.

Elsa Klensch takes us there.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

ELSA KLENSCH, CNN STYLE CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): The American Fashion Awards took place at New York's Lincoln Center this year, and it was a night of a big change. More than 2,000 guests came to see it and have a quick snack in the tents in front of the reflecting pool at the side of Avery Fisher Hall. Among them, Elizabeth Hurley, Donna Karan and her daughter Gabi (ph), Sean Puffy Combs, Naomi Campbell, Carolina Herrera, Claudia Schiffer, and actresses Chloe Sevigny and Ellen Barkin.

CFDA President Stan Herman said the new show followed the Oscars closely. Award winners were chosen from three nominees.

STAN HERMAN, PRESIDENT, CFDA: And what's different tonight is the fact that we are "open the envelope, please" tonight. I, President Stan Herman, the don, doesn't know who the winners are. Nobody knows who the winners -- and I really don't.

KLENSCH: Most designers agreed with the change.

STEPHEN DWECK, DESIGNER: And it's a little bit more interesting. You get to have fun with it.

VERA WANG, DESIGNER: I thought it brought a lot more excitement, Elsa, to these awards. I think the fact that you don't know and that it becomes so competitive, I think that's really great for fashion.

ROBERT LEE MORRIS, DESIGNER: Elsa, I think it's brilliant. It's something we should have done 30 years ago when the CFDA was first formed. And now that it's done, everybody's happy about it.

KLENSCH: The show itself was short, fast and sleek, and so computerized it was almost sterile. Oscar de la Renta won the womenswear designer of the year award. He received his last award for lifetime achievement in 1989 and he was amazed to be back on the podium.

OSCAR DE LA RENTA, WOMENSWEAR DESIGNER OF THE YEAR: I really cannot believe that I'm here. But the most wonderful thing about winning this award is that I was in such great company.

KLENSCH: Helmut Lang's award for menswear designer of the year was accepted by Ingrid Sischy from "Interview" magazine. The design team of Lambertson and Truex came together to get their award for the accessory designer of the year.

RICHARD LAMBERTSON, ACCESSORY DESIGNER OF THE YEAR: Thank you to the CFDA and the nominating committee. And thank you to the fellow nominees, Helmut Lang and our good friend Janet Savitt (ph).

KLENSCH: Robert Kennedy Jr. presented a special humanitarian award to former designer Liz Claiborne who left the company in 1989. It was for the work of her Liz Claiborne/Art Ortenberg Foundation which supports conservation groups around the world.

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LIZ CLAIBORNE, HUMANITARIAN AWARD WINNER: You don't know how wonderful it is to be here among you all again and how flattered I am by this award.

KLENSCH: For the first time, an award went to an Internet site in the newly created category of most stylish dot.com. Japanese designer Issey Miyake received it for his PleatsPlease.com. It was accepted for him by his associate Nancy Knox.

NANCY KNOX, ISSEY MIYAKE: From Issey: (SPEAKING IN JAPANESE)

KLENSCH: Bill Blass received a special award for being the dean of American fashion. Blass, who sold his business last year, was unable to be there because of ill health. He asked for his award to be accepted by a young designer who would represent a new generation. The chosen designer was Peter Som.

PETER SOM, DESIGNER: He's an inspiration and an example to myself and to all the young designers out there.

KLENSCH: Jeri Hall (ph) presented the award for international designer of the year to Jean Paul Gaultier.

JEAN PAUL GAULTIER, INTERNATIONAL DESIGNER OF THE YEAR: I must say that, for me, fashion is a passion, it's rhythm with life, and that when you like my fashion, you like all the fashion, and for us it's like a proof of your love.

KLENSCH: Valentino, who received the award for lifetime achievement, managed to deal calmly with an unexpected interruption. He was heckled by anti-fur protesters. But, Valentino, who was presented with his award by Ashley Judd, went on with his acceptance speech. And he got a standing ovation for doing it all with style.

VALENTINO, DESIGNER: And a special thanks to Giancarlo Giambetti (ph). We did a long walk together. And without him, I wouldn't be here tonight. I bow to America with all my gratitude. For 40 years, they believe in Valentino. Thank you very much.

That's the American Fashion Awards for the year 2000.

Elsa Klensch, CNN, New York.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

ANNOUNCER: You're watching CNN NEWSROOM, seen in schools around the world, because learning never stops, and neither does the news.

JORDAN: In today's look at "Democracy in America," a key development in the U.S. presidential race. After weeks of speculation, Texas Governor and Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush has introduced former U.S. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney as his running mate. Cheney served as a cabinet member under Bush's father, former President George Bush. The Texas governor says he's honored to call Cheney a friend and a running mate. Cheney says the feeling is mutual.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

CHENEY: Governor, I'm honored and proud to join your team. And I enthusiastically accept the challenge for this reason: I believe you have the vision and the courage to be a great president.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

JORDAN: Bruce Morton has a closer look at Bush's new number-two man.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE) BRUCE MORTON, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Dick Cheney got elected six times to the House of Representatives. But in normally Republican Wyoming, that's not remarkable. His one short run at higher office was when he thought about running for president in 1996.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP, MARCH 24, 1994)



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CHENEY: It's a big step to take and not one to be taken lightly. And I honestly and legitimately have not yet made that commitment to run.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MORTON: But he did explore, raised more than \$1 million in 1994, campaigned for Republicans in 47 states, went to the traditional places.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP, MAY 2, 1995)

CHENEY: I was happy to accept the invitation to come to New Hampshire, and I'll be seeing a number of other folks while I'm here.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MORTON: He was moved by issues, especially in international policy.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP, MAY 2, 1995)

CHENEY: What I see the Clintons advocating, I think is fundamentally wrong.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MORTON: He finished fourth in a straw poll in Iowa in the summer of 1994, behind eventual nominee Bob Dole, who won it, and ahead of Pat Buchanan and Dan Quayle.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP, AUGUST 9, 1994)

CHENEY: I had not campaigned the state previously, hadn't organized the state, nor did I organize anything for this event. So I felt comfortable with the showing.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MORTON: Still, before Dole, for instance, had even formally announced, Cheney was out, withdrawing in the first week of January 1995. Some said he wanted to spare himself and his family the ordeal of a long campaign. Dan Quayle said money was a factor.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP, FEBRUARY 8, 1995)

DAN QUAYLE, FMR. VICE PRESIDENT: Jack Kemp and Dick Cheney basically said that they didn't want to go through the demeaning money-raising process that you have to go through to be nominated, and there's something to that.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MORTON (on camera): What does Cheney's brief run tell us? He won't be the attack dog some number-twos have been -- Richard Nixon for Dwight Eisenhower, say, or Spiro Agnew for Nixon. He won't make the red-meat speech. He prefers issues to passion. He probably will impress voters as a grown-up, somebody who could do the number-one job if he had to.

Bruce Morton, CNN, Philadelphia.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BAKHTIAR: Well, our final story takes us into orbit where the Russian service module Zvezda has docked with the International Space Station.

JORDAN: The station's first crew is slated to arrive in October. The module will allow that crew to live and work on the station. But the space laboratory, a joint venture of 16 countries, will not be complete for another five years.

BAKHTIAR: Great pictures.

Well, that does it for us today on NEWSROOM. Thanks for joining us.

JORDAN: We'll see you back here tomorrow. Bye.



NEWSROOM for July 26, 2000 CNN July 26, 2000; Wednesday

BAKHTIAR: Bye.

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LOAD-DATE: July 26, 2000



NEWSROOM for July 26, 2000 CNN July 26, 2000; Wednesday



Middle East Peace Summit Ends Without an Agreement CNN July 25, 2000; Tuesday



Middle East Peace Summit Ends Without an Agreement CNN July 25, 2000; Tuesday





Barak, Arafat to stay on at Camp David for more talks Channel NewsAsia July 20, 2000 Thursday





WITH CLINTON BACK,;MIDDLE EAST TALKS;REACH FRANTIC PACE Plain Dealer (Cleveland, Ohio) July  
25, 2000 Tuesday, FINAL / ALL



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July 25, 2000 Tuesday, FINAL / ALL

SECTION: NATIONAL; Pg. 14A

LENGTH: 669 words

HEADLINE: WITH CLINTON BACK,;  
MIDDLE EAST TALKS;  
REACH FRANTIC PACE

BYLINE: By JOHN LANCASTER; WASHINGTON POST

DATELINE: THURMONT, MD.

BODY:

A travel-weary President Clinton met nearly around-the-clock yesterday with Israeli and Palestinian negotiators as peace talks at Camp David assumed a torrid pace. Prospects for a deal were still murky, however, as Clinton embarked on a "rolling assessment" of whether to continue the summit after 14 agonizing days.

Shrugging off the effects of a 15-hour flight from Japan on Sunday, Clinton huddled from midnight until almost dawn with Palestinian and Israeli negotiators, catching only a few hours' sleep before resuming another full day of meetings that were expected to go late into the night.

With both sides still struggling to find a formula on Jerusalem, claimed by each as its capital, the frenetic pace of the blacked-out Camp David summit appeared to signal a final and perhaps desperate push by Clinton and his team of mediators - one that could just as easily end in failure as success.

"In the most general sense, the president, in his mind, is working on what I'll call a rolling assessment of whether the substance and atmosphere of these talks are one that potentially could lead to an agreement," White House spokesman Joe Lockhart said.

"Should he come to the conclusion that the substance of the discussions and the atmosphere of the discussions do not have the potential to lead to an agreement, then he will act accordingly and bring these discussions to an end," Lockhart said.

With Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat having vowed to declare a Palestinian state by Sept. 13, with or without an agreement, Clinton's goal is nothing less than a settlement of the main issues - borders, refugees and Jerusalem - at the core of the 52-year Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

By all accounts, Jerusalem is the toughest issue, with Arafat insisting on full sovereignty over East Jerusalem - captured by Israel in 1967 - and Israel describing the city as its "eternal and undivided" capital.

WITH CLINTON BACK;;MIDDLE EAST TALKS;REACH FRANTIC PACE Plain Dealer (Cleveland, Ohio) July 25, 2000 Tuesday, FINAL / ALL

Quoting unnamed Israeli sources, the Israeli daily Haaretz reported that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak had agreed to Palestinian sovereignty over the Muslim and Christian quarters of East Jerusalem's old city and most Arab neighborhoods in the rest of East Jerusalem, effectively redividing the city.

Haaretz also said Barak was considering a compromise proposal under which Israel and the Palestinians would share administration of the Temple Mount, which is part of the old city and contains sites holy to Muslims as well as Jews.

The report could not be entirely confirmed. But a Palestinian official in the West Bank who has spoken to negotiators inside Camp David told an associate yesterday, with some sense of hope, that Barak is "really talking about Palestinian sovereignty in Arab neighborhoods in East Jerusalem," the associate said.

The associate, who spoke on condition of anonymity, added, "I guess it comes down to the old city and particularly the Temple Mount."

Hassan Abdel Rahman, who represents the Palestine Liberation Organization in Washington, offered a somewhat more pessimistic view after speaking to negotiators inside Camp David.

"I have not sensed sufficient movement by the Israelis," he said. "Let's hope the involvement of President Clinton will bring the Israelis closer."

"The discussions are more intense. I believe there's a sense that things cannot continue forever, and that a decision is necessary one way or another."

After three days on the Japanese island of Okinawa, where he attended the G-8 economic summit, Clinton returned to Camp David on Sunday evening.

Clinton traveled to Okinawa following the near-collapse of the talks last Wednesday night, when the White House announced that the summit had failed, only to declare less than two hours later that Barak and Arafat were staying after all. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright managed the talks in Clinton's absence.

As of late yesterday, Clinton had spent most of the day in meetings with a small group of Palestinians and Israelis, though not the leaders of each delegation.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO BY: ASSOCIATED PRESS; Nathan Hecht of Monroe, N.Y., right, holds a Palestinian flag as he demonstrates with a group of Hasidim yesterday near the press center at Thurmont, Md., in favor of returning Jerusalem to the Muslims.

LOAD-DATE: July 26, 2000







CLINTON REJOINS PEACE TALKS;PRESSURE HIGH, TIME IS SHORT;POPE URGES HOLY SITES OF  
JERUSALEM BE GIVEN INTERNATIONAL STATUS Saint Paul Pioneer Press (Minnesota) July 24, 2000  
Monday CITY EDITION



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July 24, 2000 Monday CITY EDITION

SECTION: MAIN; Pg. 2A

LENGTH: 515 words

HEADLINE: CLINTON REJOINS PEACE TALKS;  
PRESSURE HIGH, TIME IS SHORT;  
POPE URGES HOLY SITES OF JERUSALEM BE GIVEN INTERNATIONAL STATUS

BYLINE: Jonathan S. Landay, WASHINGTON BUREAU

DATELINE: THURMONT, Md.

BODY:

President Clinton cut short a trip to Japan and came home Sunday to rejoin the Middle East peace negotiations, trying once again to help bridge the difficult issues that still divide Israelis and Palestinians.

With little apparent progress after two weeks of talks, Clinton was under pressure to use his prestige and persuasive powers to wring breakthroughs from Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

Clinton paused only long enough for a change of clothes at the White House before going to Camp David, where he met with Barak in the evening and planned a later meeting with Arafat.

"We expect meetings into the night," said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher.

Little was being said about what the men were discussing; indeed, Boucher tamped down expectations for what could be accomplished. He explained Clinton's busy schedule and noted that for all three men, the time available for continued talks was "not unlimited."

Before departing from the Japanese island of Okinawa on Sunday, Clinton said that the two sides had "not wasted their time" in his absence, when talks were led by Secretary of State Madeline Albright. "Whether we get an agreement or not I can't tell, but they have really worked hard," said Clinton. "So whatever happens, I think they have continued to make headway."

Both Barak and Arafat face powerful domestic constituencies opposed to major concessions on a peace accord, especially on the delicate and contentious issue of Jerusalem's future.

The city is sacred to Muslim, Jewish and Christian faiths. Palestinians want control of east Jerusalem, which is primarily Arab. Israel has long held that it must continue to have control of the entire city.

CLINTON REJOINS PEACE TALKS;PRESSURE HIGH, TIME IS SHORT;POPE URGES HOLY SITES OF JERUSALEM BE GIVEN INTERNATIONAL STATUS Saint Paul Pioneer Press (Minnesota) July 24, 2000 Monday CITY EDITION

Pope John Paul II on Sunday urged creation of a special international status for the holy sites of Jerusalem, saying that only world oversight can safeguard all the ancient city's religions.

"The Holy See continues to maintain that only a special statute, internationally guaranteed, can effectively preserve the most sacred areas of the Holy City," John Paul said, speaking from the window of his summer villa outside Rome.

International oversight would "assure freedom of religion and of worship for all the faithful who, in the region and the entire world, look to Jerusalem as a crossroads of peace and of coexistence," the pontiff said, lingering at his window in his weekly Sunday address to pilgrims to make his case.

Israel's Foreign Ministry immediately dismissed the appeal. "It's not on the table," said Aviv Shiron, spokesman for Foreign Minister David Levy.

A Palestinian spokesman welcomed the pope's words, interpreting them as siding with Palestinians challenging Israel's insistence on sole stewardship.

"This is a sign from the pope, who is the highest Christian authority in this world, that he is denying the claim of Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem," insisted Hassan Abdel Rahman, a frequent spokesman for the Palestinians during the Camp David talks.

This report includes information from the Associated Press.

GRAPHIC: Photo:David Guttenfelder, Associated Press

Japanese schoolchildren say goodbye to President Clinton and his daughter, Chelsea, as they walk toward Air Force One at the Kadena Airbase in Okinawa Sunday, leaving for the U.S. after the annual Group of Eight summit.

LOAD-DATE: January 30, 2002





THE FEAR OF FAILURE LED ARAFAT, BARAK TO TARRY AT TALKS; Plain Dealer (Cleveland, Ohio) July 21, 2000 Friday, FINAL / ALL



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July 21, 2000 Friday, FINAL / ALL

SECTION: NATIONAL; Pg. 11A

LENGTH: 1182 words

HEADLINE: THE FEAR OF FAILURE LED ARAFAT, BARAK TO TARRY AT TALKS;

BYLINE: By JOHN LANCASTER; WASHINGTON POST

DATELINE: THURMONT, MD.

BODY:

It was just before midnight Wednesday at Andrews Air Force Base as Hassan Abdel Rahman paced back and forth, waiting for the motorcade carrying Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. His arrival would signal the final collapse of Middle East peace talks at Camp David.

On the asphalt runway apron outside the terminal, Arafat's pilots supervised the fueling of his Challenger executive jet and ran through their checklists as luggage was loaded on board. Then Rahman, who represents the Palestine Liberation Organization in Washington, got a call on his cell phone. Tell the pilots to go back to their hotel, one of Arafat's security men told him. The chairman is staying.

Thus did Rahman learn of the remarkable, Lazarus-like resurrection of peace talks that barely an hour earlier had been officially pronounced dead by no less an authority than the White House itself. With Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak both having decided earlier in the evening to abandon the nine-day-old summit, President Clinton had persuaded the two adversaries to step back from the brink and continue their make-or-break negotiations with a promise to rejoin them at Camp David upon his return from Japan on Sunday or Monday.

The last-minute rescue does not portend a breakthrough in talks that by all accounts have been extraordinarily tense and difficult. But a reconstruction of the last hours before Clinton's pre-dawn departure for a G-8 economic summit on Okinawa does suggest that both Barak and Arafat, having peered into the abyss of a failed summit, reached essentially the same conclusion at essentially the same time - that the price of failure was too great. Yesterday, officials on all sides seized on that as a glimmer of hope for the days ahead.

At Camp David yesterday morning, the mood was described by government spokesmen as somewhat more relaxed than it has been in recent days, as U.S. negotiators led by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright - who will oversee the talks in Clinton's absence - caught up on their sleep or chortled over newspaper headlines announcing that the summit had failed.

There were no illusions, however, about the challenges that lie ahead. Explaining the decision to continue the summit, White House spokesman Joe Lockhart told reporters early yesterday morning that

THE FEAR OF FAILURE LED ARAFAT, BARAK TO TARRY AT TALKS; Plain Dealer (Cleveland, Ohio) July 21, 2000 Friday, FINAL / ALL

"there is nothing that's happened ... that would make us believe that they are closer to resolving their differences."

Meanwhile, with neither Israel nor the Palestinians expecting any serious bargaining until Clinton rejoins the summit, officials from both sides today reiterated their accusations of intransigence on the part of the other. There were suggestions from each camp that Barak and Arafat had decided to stay more as a courtesy to Clinton, rather than out of any real conviction that additional time would narrow wide gaps.

"The idea is to try to go to the maximum to make sure you have not missed an opportunity," Rahman said in an interview.

An Israeli official close to the talks, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said: "Barak is still not convinced that Arafat is a reliable partner. He's staying out of respect for the American president."

The last-minute rescue came after grueling negotiations aimed at producing a final settlement of all the major issues - the status of Jerusalem, the borders of a future Palestinian state and the fate of Palestinian refugees - at the core of the 52-year Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Citing the need for secrecy, U.S. spokesmen have refused to discuss the substance of the talks, which over the last several days have proceeded virtually around the clock.

According to Palestinian and Israeli officials in contact with their 12-member delegations, the talks have in recent days foundered on the question of Jerusalem. Palestinians demand that Israel grant them a sovereign capital in East Jerusalem, which is home to 200,000 Arabs as well as al-Aqsa mosque, the third holiest shrine in Islam. Israel, which captured East Jerusalem from Jordan in 1967, insists that the city remain its "eternal and undivided" capital. Before the summit, Barak's government floated proposals that would grant the Palestinians some form of sovereignty over Arab neighborhoods of East Jerusalem - but not enough, apparently, to satisfy Palestinian demands.

On Wednesday morning, Barak's frustration with Palestinian demands became public when Israeli officials defied the news blackout and released a letter he wrote to Clinton accusing Arafat of "not carrying out negotiations in good faith." While there was certainly an element of gamesmanship in Barak's letter, Israeli officials gave every indication of planning to leave.

As the afternoon and evening wore on, Barak's departure was delayed. But Israeli officials continued to prepare for failure. They booked a conference room for a 1 a.m. news conference, at which Barak would describe his reasons for leaving. His plane was loaded with food.

Inside Camp David, meanwhile, another drama was unfolding. Clinton had already delayed his departure to Japan by one day, and made clear to the two delegations that he had no intention of further postponing the trip, according to Lockhart. But the summit was unraveling. Wednesday afternoon and evening, Clinton shuttled frantically between Barak and Arafat's cabins.

Lockhart declined to provide details of the conversations. But it is clear that Clinton had prepared a fallback position. During a meeting with Barak that began around 2 p.m., an Israeli official said, Clinton pleaded with the Israeli leader to reconsider his decision to leave, asking him to remain at Camp David until his return from Japan. Clinton apparently made the same pitch to Arafat.

Twice during the day, Clinton called Jordan's King Abdullah to enlist his help in persuading Arafat and Barak to stay, according to a Reuters report from Amman. Clinton also spoke to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Despite his best efforts, however, Clinton appeared to be making little headway. At about 10:30 p.m., Lockhart told reporters, "the president made the judgment that it was time to leave, that we would be leaving ... without an agreement and he would travel to Japan." Twenty minutes later, Lockhart issued a terse statement informing the world that "the summit has come to a conclusion without reaching agreement."

Summit participants made preparations to leave. Israeli baggage was loaded onto a truck at Camp David.



THE FEAR OF FAILURE LED ARAFAT, BARAK TO TARRY AT TALKS; Plain Dealer (Cleveland, Ohio) July 21, 2000 Friday, FINAL / ALL

Inside the forested retreat, "We had motorcades, we had bags, we had everything," Boucher said. "Everything was ready to conclude. That was a real situation."

Then, less than an hour after the White House issued its statement, Barak and Arafat communicated their change of heart to U.S. mediators.

At 12:40 a.m. yesterday morning, Clinton arrived at the press center in Thurmont to say, in a voice roughened by fatigue, that "these are in fundamental ways the hardest peace issues I have ever dealt with. But the short answer to why we're still here after everybody thought we were through is that nobody wanted to give up."

GRAPHIC: PHOTO BY: WHITE HOUSE

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and his interpreter, Nabil Abu Rudineh, center, listen to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright yesterday at Camp David, Md. Albright took over the Mideast peace summit negotiations while President Clinton attends an economic summit in Okinawa, Japan.

LOAD-DATE: July 22, 2000



Summit Talks Going Down to the Wire The Washington Post July 19, 2000, Wednesday, Final Edition



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The Washington Post

July 19, 2000, Wednesday, Final Edition

SECTION: A SECTION; Pg. A01

LENGTH: 888 words

HEADLINE: Summit Talks Going Down to the Wire

BYLINE: John Lancaster , Washington Post Staff Writer

DATELINE: THURMONT, Md., July 18

BODY:

In an atmosphere of high drama, rumored catastrophe and occasional hints of progress, bleary-eyed negotiators led by President Clinton worked virtually around the clock today as they tried to complete an Israeli-Palestinian peace settlement.

There was still no word about whether the two sides were close to an agreement. But there were reports that both Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak were ready to abandon the summit in frustration over deadlocked discussions on issues such as the status of Jerusalem.

White House spokesman Joe Lockhart told reporters that Clinton worked until 5 this morning, meeting twice overnight with Barak, and would likely keep similar hours tonight. Clinton decided early Wednesday to delay his trip to Japan, where he is scheduled to attend a G-8 economic summit on the island of Okinawa. If the president's schedule is not further delayed, he will arrive in Japan on Friday for the summit, one day later than scheduled.

"Both sides are working in good faith to try to reach an agreement in a short time frame," Lockhart said late this afternoon. "These are very difficult issues. They've spent a lot of time together. They've spent very little time sleeping."

[At 10 p.m., spokesman P.J. Crowley said Clinton had not met tonight with either Barak or Arafat but that U.S. negotiators were shuttling between the negotiating teams throughout the evening, Reuters reported. Crowley said Clinton was "focused on moving the parties forward."]

Summit Talks Going Down to the Wire The Washington Post July 19, 2000, Wednesday, Final Edition

With a tight news blackout clamped over the talks at Camp David, the presidential retreat in Maryland's Catocin Mountains, the summit is the focus of intense speculation in the Israeli media, some of which cited official Israeli sources in reporting today that Barak was ready to head home in frustration.

An official at the United Nations in New York, meanwhile, offered partial confirmation for a Reuters report that Arafat planned to telephone U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan to tell him that the talks had foundered on the issue of Jerusalem, then was talked out of making the call by Clinton. According to the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, Arafat called Annan's office in New York this morning but was called away to another meeting at Camp David before he could be patched through to the secretary general, who was at home. Lockhart said Clinton met with Arafat today for 90 minutes.

Hassan Abdel Rahman, the Palestine Liberation Organization's representative in Washington, said in a telephone interview that, while he could not confirm the report, "definitely there's a serious disagreement over Jerusalem. . . . If the Israelis do not accept Palestinian sovereignty on the eastern part of Jerusalem, I don't think there's going to be any deal. I cannot predict what will happen, but I can predict this Palestinian position will not change."

Some assessments were more promising. Two senior Israeli officials said in interviews today that Barak is committed to staying with the talks until Clinton declares them at an end. "My impression is that things are going fairly well in the sense that they were proceeding to discuss the most concrete and painful issues," said one of the officials, who spoke this morning with counterparts at Camp David. "In the last few hours, there has been a better flow of discussion."

The official confirmed that American "bridging proposals" are "running back and forth between the delegations," but he offered no predictions as to whether Clinton's efforts would succeed. "I would say honestly that every possibility has an equal probability," the official said.

Another Israeli official, who is also in regular contact with Barak's delegation, dismissed Arafat's reported threat to abandon the talks over Jerusalem as "Palestinian spin," adding, "The Israeli perspective is that the negotiations are approaching some sort of peak, and we're all very aware of the president's timetable."

With Clinton's help, both sides are struggling to reach agreement on the issues at the core of their 52-year conflict, including the status of Jerusalem, the borders of a future Palestinian state and the fate of Palestinian refugees and their descendants. While all the issues are complex, Jerusalem's status is generally regarded as the toughest. Israeli media reports over the past several days have made much of the fact that Barak has been joined at Camp David by Reuven Merhav, a former foreign ministry official who is considered an expert on the holy city. Merhav, now a fellow at a Jerusalem think tank, recently authored a paper offering various solutions to the competing claims of Israelis and Palestinians on Jerusalem.

Lockhart dismissed as "speculative" questions about whether Clinton would delay his trip to Japan in order to continue the Camp David summit. The president's plane is scheduled to depart the Washington area at 9:50 a.m.

By this afternoon, however, it was clear that the Camp David summit would go down to the wire--and possibly beyond. Lockhart announced that the departure of the White House press plane accompanying Clinton to Japan would be pushed back from 8 tonight to Wednesday morning. Lockhart later told reporters to prepare for a possible "adjustment" in the president's departure schedule.

LOAD-DATE: July 19, 2000



Page  
Israeli and Palestinian negotiators begin detailed talks on a final peace treaty National Public Radio (NPR) March  
21, 2000 Tuesday

Turmoil racks Israel, West Bank before Clinton visit USA TODAY December 9, 1998, Wednesday,



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USA TODAY

December 9, 1998, Wednesday, FINAL EDITION

Turmoil racks Israel, West Bank before Clinton visit USA TODAY December 9, 1998, Wednesday,

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 12A

LENGTH: 623 words

HEADLINE: Turmoil racks Israel, West Bank before Clinton visit

BYLINE: Jack Kelley

DATELINE: JERUSALEM

BODY:

JERUSALEM -- New clashes erupted Tuesday in the West Bank as pressure mounted on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to abandon his land-for-security deal with the Palestinians.

The violence and political turmoil came only four days before President Clinton's visit to Israel and the Palestinian territories. The trip was intended to shore up support for the Wye River interim peace deal signed in Washington Oct. 23 and restore calm to the region.

But it appears to be having the opposite effect. Netanyahu, who is struggling to stay in power, said Tuesday that he could not carry out a second hand-over of land on the West Bank of the Jordan River to Palestinian civil control by Dec. 18, as mandated by the agreement. Israel captured the area from Jordan in 1967.

David Bar-Illan, Netanyahu's spokesman, said the Palestinian leadership must renounce a clause in its charter calling for the destruction of Israel and abandon plans to declare a Palestinian state next May.

But Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said Netanyahu's decision "has to do with his survival as prime minister," not with alleged Palestinian violations of the accord. Israeli hard-liners have threatened to call for early elections to oust Netanyahu if he goes ahead with the withdrawal from 5% more of West Bank land.

Palestinians, angered by Netanyahu's statement and a dispute with Israel over the release of political prisoners, threw stones at Israeli troops and motorists in three clashes in the West Bank.

In the town of Ram, north of Jerusalem, soldiers fired tear gas and rubber bullets at Palestinian high school students, injuring four of them. In the Kalandia refugee camp, troops fired rubber bullets after their Jeep was stoned and an officer was slightly injured. Near Bethlehem, an 11-year-old Israeli girl was hurt when stones struck the car in which she was riding.

Among those wounded in the recent violence was Erekat's 21-year-old cousin, Nasr Erekat. He remained on life support Tuesday after being shot in the head by Israeli troops on Monday. Erekat said his cousin was "clinically dead."

U.S. Middle East envoy Dennis Ross, who arrived here Tuesday to



Turmoil racks Israel, West Bank before Clinton visit USA TODAY December 9, 1998, Wednesday,

prepare for Clinton's trip, appealed for calm on both sides.

"The place to deal with differences is in discussions at the table, not in the streets," Ross said after meeting with Netanyahu. "There is no place for violence in this (peace) process."

Meanwhile in Washington, Palestinian official Hassan Abdel Rahman inflamed already heightened tensions Tuesday when he said Palestinians were entitled to 88% to 90% of the West Bank, not the 40% called for by the Wye River deal. He also said that the prisoners Israel has so far released were common criminals and not political detainees as the Wye River deal mandates.

Rahman called upon Clinton to help put the peace deal "back on track." U.S. officials fear Clinton will find himself in a showdown with Israel over its refusal to keep pulling back from the West Bank unless Palestinian violence ends. Clinton hopes to meet jointly with Netanyahu and Palestinian Chairman Yasser Arafat during his visit Saturday through Dec. 15.

Also Tuesday, dozens of Jewish settlers protested outside of Netanyahu's offices after a West Bank settler was shot Monday night, reportedly by a Palestinian gunman in a drive-by shooting.

The driver is a resident of the Ganim settlement, one of several left isolated after Israel withdrew troops from 2% of the West Bank under the first stage of the land-for-security agreement.

"Only 17 days have passed since the withdrawal, and already they are shooting at us," read a sign held by the protesters.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO, B/W, AFP

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AP Top News at 6 a.m. EDT Friday, Oct. 23, 1998 Associated Press Online October 23, 1998; Friday



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October 23, 1998; Friday 06:01 Eastern Time

SECTION: Domestic, non-Washington, general news item

LENGTH: 800 words

HEADLINE: AP Top News at 6 a.m. EDT Friday, Oct. 23, 1998

BYLINE: GABRIEL MADWAY

BODY:

Mideast Peace Deal Nearly Complete

QUEENSTOWN, Md. (AP)

Israelis and Palestinians were "very close" to sealing a complete West Bank land-for-peace deal that would eliminate anti-Israel language in a Palestinian charter and free scores of alleged Arab political prisoners, U.S. and Palestinian officials said today. A member of the Palestinian delegation, Hassan Abdel Rahman, said the negotiators hoped to sign an accord at the White House around midday if the "the small issues, which we don't believe will be an obstacle," are resolved.

Philippines Typhoon Kills 80

MANILA, Philippines (AP)

Typhoon Babs pummeled the northern Philippines with heavy winds and rain today, killing at least 80 people and leaving dozens missing. Parts of Manila were submerged and many businesses closed for the second straight day. At least 53 people were killed in landslides on Catanduanes Island, where the typhoon first hit land yesterday, local police chief Renato Arevalo said. Seventeen others died in landslides in nearby Camarines Sur province, he said.

Storm Expected to Become Hurricane

MIAMI (AP)

Tropical Storm Mitch spun across the Caribbean early today as forecasters predicted the slow-moving storm would become a hurricane soon. After remaining stationary most of yesterday, Mitch began heading north and was expected to get stronger, said the National Hurricane Center in Miami. At 2 a.m. EDT, the storm was about 385 miles south of Kingston, Jamaica. The system was expected to eventually turn to the northwest, but it was unclear whether it would hit the United States.

Report: U.S. Warned of Embassy Plot

NEW YORK (AP)

AP Top News at 6 a.m. EDT Friday, Oct. 23, 1998 Associated Press Online October 23, 1998; Friday

American intelligence officials were warned that Islamic militants were planning to bomb the U.S. embassy in Nairobi nine months before the attack, The New York Times reported today. The information came from Mustafa Mahmoud Said Ahmed, an Egyptian man now in jail in Tanzania on charges of bombing the U.S. embassy there. The simultaneous blasts on Aug. 7 killed 224 people. The State Department has said it wasn't warned before the attacks. But a spokesman acknowledged yesterday that the CIA had relayed two reports about Ahmed to the department nearly a year ago, the Times said.

#### Iranians Vote in Key Election

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)

Iranians voted today for a key assembly that is expected to be dominated by hard-line clergymen who favor unhindered powers for the country's supreme religious leader. The election for the 86-member Assembly of Experts is the most important in Iran apart from the presidential race because the assembly elects the country's supreme religious leader, who has the final say in government matters. Hard-line newspapers estimated that only about 39 percent of the 38 million eligible voters will show up.

#### Pinochet Lawyers Challenge Arrest

LONDON (AP)

British newspapers reported today that the government may allow Gen. Augusto Pinochet to escape a Spanish magistrate's extradition order and be freed, "on compassionate grounds." Yesterday, Pinochet's lawyers challenged the legality of his arrest in Britain and Chile's president called for compassion for the ailing former dictator accused of torture, terrorism, and genocide. Aides to Prime Minister Tony Blair stressed that Britain's home secretary has the power to overrule the extradition request by the Spanish magistrate, the Daily Telegraph reported.

#### Study Links Valium, Car Accidents

LONDON (AP)

Thousands of traffic accidents could be avoided every year if people who use anti-anxiety drugs such as Valium did not drive, say authors of a study published today. Drivers taking such anxiety medications during the day are more than twice as likely to be involved in traffic accidents as those not taking the drugs, according to the study in The Lancet, a British medical journal. The risk of accidents for people under the age of 45 is more than three times greater if taking the drugs, the study said.

#### Japanese Stocks Finish Lower

TOKYO (AP)

Japanese stock prices finished lower today on profit-taking following a five-day gain. The benchmark 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average fell 150.86 points, closing the week at 14,144.70.

#### Family Reunion Awaits 'El Duque'

NEW YORK (AP)

The family of Orlando "El Duque" Hernandez was ready to reunite with the New York Yankees pitcher today just in time for a ticker tape parade through the city's Canyon of Heroes. Hernandez's ex-wife, their two daughters and his mother were granted permission by Cuba to fly to the United States last night. The U.S. State Department said the family would have a brief visit before returning to Cuba. Hernandez fled Cuba 10 months ago by climbing onto a rickety raft and was later signed by the Yankees.

LOAD-DATE: October 23, 1998









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SHOW: NPR ALL THINGS CONSIDERED (NPR 8:00 pm ET)

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GUESTS: Hassan Abdel Rahman, Zalman Shoval

BYLINE: Noah Adams; Robert Siegel;

HIGHLIGHT:

Robert talks with Hassan Abdel Rahman, chief PLO an Palestinian National Authority Representative, and Zalman Shoval, the Israeli ambassador to the United States, about tomorrow' Mideast Summit at the Wye Plantation in Maryland. In consecutive interviews, the two speak about the issues of a Palestinian state, Israeli redeployment from the West Bank, and opening an airport and seaport in Gaza. Both Shoval and Rahman are cautiously optimistic.

BODY:

NOAH ADAMS, HOST: This is NPR's ALL THINGS CONSIDERED. I'm Noah Adams.

ROBERT SIEGEL, HOST: And I'm Robert Siegel.

At Wye Plantation, a conference center on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, Yasser Arafat, Benjamin Netanyahu, their respective entourages, and American diplomats will start trying to knock out an agreement tomorrow.

They will be talking about an American plan for further implementing the Oslo accords.

We're going to hear official Palestinian and Israeli views of what's at stake in those talks.

Hassan Abdel Rahman is the chief Palestinian representative in Washington. He says that some of the items on the table at Wye Plantation, elements of the American plan, would be extremely meaningful to Palestinians. For example, putting substantially more of the West Bank under Palestinian control, and permitting the Gaza Strip to have an airport and a seaport.

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE: Remember that Gaza is held hostage literally to Israel without a seaport or an airport. Israel can close Gaza any moment at this

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point. Turning the people of Gaza and to literally hostages. Why should the people of Gaza who are Palestinians be disconnected with the people of the West Bank?

SIEGEL: If Gaza were in fact opened up and if it were permitted an airport and a seaport, and if more land were under both joint control and also more land under full Palestinian control, would -- do you think we think we would actually see at this point, some greater Palestinian enthusiasm for this process, or is that lost? Is that...

RAHMAN: Oh, absolutely.

SIEGEL: ... dead?

RAHMAN: Even -- I mean listen if you poll the Palestinian public opinion, you would find that the overwhelming majority of the Palestinian people as well as the Israeli people are supportive of the peace process. So, the Palestinians want peace. They are enthusiastic about peace. But they would like to see the fruits of this process. So far the fruits of the process have been negative. I mean the quality of life for the Palestinians, have deteriorated. It did not improve. If you look at real income of the Palestinians in Gaza for example, you will see that there is a decrease of about 11 percent.

SIEGEL: The Israelis cited the attack this week on two Israeli men by it seems...

RAHMAN: By whom?

SIEGEL: ... well, they claim by Palestinians...

RAHMAN: How do they know? Did they investigate? Do they have any information? I believe that -- listen, if Mr. Netanyahu is looking for pretexts not to implement the agreement, he will always find pretexts. There will always be pretexts for us and for him.

But if we want to look for reasons to move forward with this process, we have a thousand reasons to move forward.

SIEGEL: Mr. Rahman, one other point. It's been suggested in part by Yusi Balen (ph) the former Israeli official in the Labor government, but also I believe by the United States according to Israeli newspaper reports, that the one break through at Wye might involve getting the Israelis to accept in principle the idea that a Palestinian state will result from this entire process and if that principle is accepted then perhaps the May deadline at which Mr. Arafat might unilaterally declare such a state, could be pushed back a ways.

Is that idea at all enticing as a way to reinvigorate this process?

RAHMAN: Well, I'm not about to really discuss any particular formulas but let me say also in general that this peace process was intended to reach at its conclusion on May 4, the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

And therefore, this Israeli government will contribute enormously to the peace process by accepting this concept.

SIEGEL: Mr. Rahman, thank you very much for talking with us.

RAHMAN: You are most welcome.

SIEGEL: Hassan Abdel Rahman is the chief representative in Washington of the PLO and the Palestinian National Authority.

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Israel's ambassador to the U.S. is Zalman Shoval. Shoval is not enthusiastic about the idea of Israel declaring its acceptance of the idea of a Palestinian state.

ZALMAN SHOVAL, ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES: Saying to the Palestinians, OK, let's extend the process back. We guarantee you a Palestinian state. At the end of that, is like a sort of pre-dated check. We really want to see what all the ins and outs of the character of the Palestinian entity should be at the end of the day. So, I don't really think that either tactically or intrinsically that's a very good idea.

SIEGEL: When Prime Minister Netanyahu, reacting to the attack on two Israeli men, the shooting, when he attributed that to Palestinians who he says then went in to the area controlled by the Palestinian Authority, and said that this would really dampen the prospects at Wye Plantation.

Was he as the Palestinians claim, looking for a pretext to be pessimistic about these talks? Might he have been a bit more positive about this summit despite that attack, if say the Palestinians come up with suspects?

SHOVAL: We are very positive. Positive is even a weak term. However, this whole conference at Wye Plantation, this whole agreement is about Palestinians living up to previous agreements which they made in Oslo which they made to the late Prime Minister Rabin which they made in the Hebron agreement, principally on security.

And the brutal murder yesterday of two young Israeli civilians -- by-the-way in West Jerusalem -- by Palestinian probably Hamas agents, fleeing back to the Palestinian controlled territory pinpoints, or it underscores our very legitimate concerns about the security of our citizens.

I think that is what Prime Minister Netanyahu tried to stress.

SIEGEL: Do you accept that the Palestinians, in order to make a go of Gaza in whatever degree of statehood, independence, deep autonomy, whatever condition it is, that they would have to have access to it from the sea and from the air and that those are reasonable requests by the Palestinians?

SHOVAL: They are definitely reasonable and acceptable requests in principle. We would like their economy to flourish and then to become less dependent on us.

SIEGEL: But in Israel's view of in order to have any agreement at all, everything must be agreed to, does that mean that opening up an industrial park, seaport and airport that can't happen until you see progress on tracking down and even preventing Hamas acts of violence against Israelis?

SHOVAL: Not necessarily. These are separate issues. What I will say is that obviously there will not be or cannot be further Israeli withdrawal from the territories unless the Palestinians agree to the American designed work plan with regards to security.

The other things I don't want to sweep them under the carpet because they are very important, but I would say that if we get the security issue resolved, there is a good chance for progress on the other things as well.

SIEGEL: Ambassador Shoval, thank you very much for talking with us once again. SHOVAL: Thank you.

SIEGEL: Israeli Ambassador Zalman Shoval. We also spoke with Hassan Abdel Rahman of the Palestinian National Authority about the talks that start tomorrow at Wye Plantation in Maryland.

This is a rush transcript. This copy may not be in its final form and may be updated.

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Tuesday



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The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer

May 5, 1998, Tuesday Transcript #6121

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HEADLINE: Talking About Talking;  
HMO's and the Law;  
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Cloudsplitter

BYLINE: ANCHOR: JIM LEHRER; GUESTS: LENNY BEN-DAVID, Israeli Embassy; HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, Palestine Liberation Organization; JACQUES SANTER, President, European; CORRESPONDENTS: ELIZABETH FARNSWORTH; TOM BEARDEN; PHIL PONCE; KWAME HOLMAN; RICHARD RODRIGUEZ

BODY:

JIM LEHRER: Good evening I'm Jim Lehrer. On the NewsHour tonight, Israeli and Palestinian views of the London peace talks; a Tom Bearden report on suing HMO's for malpractice; a Newsmaker interview about the Euro with the head of the European Union; and a Roger Rosenblatt essay about John Brown. It all follows our summary of the news this Tuesday.

NEWS SUMMARY

JIM LEHRER: The Middle East peace talks ended today in London without a breakthrough. Secretary of State Albright invited both sides to continue talking next Monday in Washington with President Clinton. But she said that depends on the two sides agreeing to some interim steps. Albright met separately with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and Palestinian Leader Arafat for two days. The question of how much West Bank land Israel would give up remained the issue. Netanyahu and Arafat said progress had been made and said they hope the talks continue.

YASSER ARAFAT: [speaking through interpreter] I want the continuation of the American and European efforts being exerted seriously to revive the peace process and put it back on track, in spite of the obstacles and difficulties posed by the Israeli government.

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU, Prime Minister, Israel: The best achievements of peace are achieved directly and bilaterally. And one would hope that we would get into that mode once we've gained final status. Evidently, it's that--that has alluded us so far, but not because of Israel's side.

JIM LEHRER: Sec. Albright also spoke to reporters in London. We'll have excerpts and more on this story right after the News Summary. The Associated Press and other news organizations reported today that President Clinton's claim of executive privilege was rejected in the Monica Lewinsky case. Federal Judge Norma Holloway Johnson made the ruling. The president could now appeal that decision. The privilege was reportedly invoked during the testimony of White House aides Bruce Lindsey and Sidney Blumenthal. Also on the investigation today President Clinton's friend Vernon Jordan testified before the grand jury in Washington. It was his third appearance. The others were in March. After today's session

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Jordan said he answered all questions to the best of his ability and said he expected to be called back for a fourth time. Jordan has said he helped Lewinsky look for a lawyer and a job but he did not encourage her to lie to cover up an affair she allegedly had with Mr. Clinton. The Whitewater grand jury in Arkansas concluded its investigation today, two days earlier. In two years of work it returned one indictment. That was against Susan McDougal, a business partner of the Clintons in the 1980's. She was indicted yesterday for refusing to testify before the panel. An earlier grand jury indicted McDougal, her late husband, and former Governor Jim Guy tucker on bank fraud charges, and they were convicted. The FBI added Eric Robert Rudolph to its 10 Most Wanted List today. He's the suspect in the bombing at a Birmingham, Alabama, abortion clinic in January and three bombings in Atlanta, including the one during the '96 summer Olympic games. FBI Director Louie Freeh and Attorney General Janet Reno made the announcement in Washington. Reno said the reward for Rudolph's capture will be raised to \$1 million.

JANET RENO: I encourage anyone who has information, clues, or possible tips regarding Mr. Rudolph's whereabouts or any aspects of these acts of domestic terrorism to come forward. The stakes are quite simple. Whoever committed the acts might kill again and must be brought to justice.

JIM LEHRER: The new Ronald Reagan building and international trade center was dedicated today in Washington. President Clinton and Former First Lady Nancy Reagan led the ceremony. The building is located a few blocks down Pennsylvania Avenue from the White House. It's the federal government's second largest, smaller only than the Pentagon. It will house up to 7,000 government and private sector workers. Later in the day Mr. Clinton met with Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan in what was described as a routine meeting on the economy, not on interest rates. The key measure of future economic activity went up in March, the Conference Board reported today. The New York-based business research group said its index of leading economic indicators rose .2 percent. It was seen as a sign growth will continue throughout the year. The Vatican was investigating the shooting death last night of the new commander of the Pope's Swiss guards. We have more in this report from Paul Davies of Independent Television News.

PAUL DAVIES, ITN: Colonel Alouis Esteman had only been appointed commander of the Swiss Guard hours before he was murdered. He and his Venezuelan-born wife, seen here with Pope John Paul, were shot at close range in their apartment within the walls of the Vatican. The body of a 23-year-old corporal was found nearby. It's believed the young soldier murdered the Estemans then committed suicide. At a press conference the Vatican dismissed any suggestion of a sexual motive.

SPOKESMAN: The fact has been--what you call a fit of madness in a very peculiar character or a person with certain peculiar psychological characteristics.

PAUL DAVIES: As senior bodyguard, Col. Esteman had accompanied the Pope on more than 30 foreign trips. In 1981, he tried to shield the pontiff from the bullets of would-be assassin Aliatchka. The Pope has said he's deeply saddened by the killings.

JIM LEHRER: And that's it for the News Summary tonight. Now it's on to the Middle East talks, HMO's and the law, the head of the European Union, and a Roger Rosenblatt essay.

#### FOCUS - TALKING ABOUT TALKING

JIM LEHRER: The Middle East talks. The latest ended today in London and may resume next Monday in Washington. In London here's how Secretary of State Albright described the pace of talks among the Israelis, Palestinians, Americans, and British.

MADELEINE ALBRIGHT, Secretary of State: Good afternoon. For the past 48 hours I have been involved in an intensive effort to reach an agreement that would put Israeli-Palestinian negotiations back on track. We have made some progress which we hope will facilitate agreement in the coming days. If the issues are resolved, President Clinton is prepared to invite the parties to Washington on May 11, 1998, to launch accelerated permanent status negotiations. I have discussed the American ideas with both leaders, and they have engaged with me in a serious and constructive manner. We will need to have further discussions with both of them in the coming days, but Chairman Arafat has accepted our ideas in principle. We have a strategic opportunity to put the peace process back on track, and we cannot afford to



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lose it. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Prime Minister Blair and his government for their gracious hospitality and his staunch support for my efforts. Ready to take questions.

REPORTER: Is the condition that the parties accept the American ideas--you used a slightly more--a softer phrasing--and would you care for the first time to say in any way what those ideas are?

MADELEINE ALBRIGHT: Well, first of all, I have said that it would be on the basis of the American ideas, which I think is pretty much the same way we've been saying it all along. And I don't want to go into any further detail on what they are because they continue to be a subject of discussion and negotiation.

REPORTER: Madam Secretary, two questions: First, are you setting a deadline for an agreement before talks can open on Monday, are you setting a deadline? Do you say you have to agree on the West Bank withdrawals, the two phases, before you will meet with Netanyahu and Arafat in Washington? And will they meet together? And secondly, at what point will you get tired of conducting peace talks on these issues? You said last week that talks keep--can't keep going around in circles, yet, the talks here proved inconclusive. Are you getting frustrated? Are you getting tired?

MADELEINE ALBRIGHT: Well, first of all, we have said that this invitation is for May 11th, conditioned, as I stated, and so if you want to say that is a deadline, the deadline is such that there is no point in talking about the permanent status, the accelerated permanent status talks if we have not agreed on these other issues. And I must say we have been engaged in what I consider a vigorous effort to achieve an agreement. We will continue to do so in the coming days But if agreement is not achieved, we will have to re-examine our approach to the peace process. The U.S. remains committed to a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace, and frankly, the question is what is the best way for us to bring the parties to the point of making the necessary decisions, and that's what we'll be looking at. But I have to say that I think the meetings here were important. I think, as I said in my opening statement, there has been some progress. And Prime Minister Netanyahu, I think, has some constructive and interesting ideas that he is going to be examining with his cabinet. I, as all of you have followed me around, I am realistic, but I'm also hopeful, and I think we'll just have to see. And if this particular approach is one that does not reach the kind of determination or fruition that we would like, as I said, we will re-examine our approach to this. And we'll take it from there.

REPORTER: Would that be walking away from the talks?

MADELEINE ALBRIGHT: We are not going to walk away from a peace process. It's too important to the United States and to Israel and to our friends in the Middle East. But we will need to re-examine the way that we go about it. I think that's the most I can say at this point.

JIM LEHRER: And now to Phil Ponce.

PHIL PONCE: Now we get the Israeli and Palestinian perspectives. Lenny Ben-David is the deputy chief of mission or number 2 diplomat at Israel's embassy in Washington. Hassan Abdel-Rahman is the chief Washington representative of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. And gentlemen, welcome to both of you. Mr. Ben-David, your assessment of how the talks went in Washington and London.

LENNY BEN-DAVID, Israeli Embassy: I have spoken to people in the prime minister's party. They're cautiously optimistic. They think there's a very good chance that they will be back in Washington on Monday. And there was a movement on a broad range of issues, and they suspect that the negotiators who still remain in London will be able to move things ahead. And I should note that all parties, the secretary, Chairman Arafat, and the prime minister all felt there was progress.

PHIL PONCE: Mr. Rahman, your assessment.

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, Palestine Liberation Organization: Well, obviously, the talks in London were inconclusive due to the fact that the Israeli side did not accept the ideas presented by the secretary of state, which we did accept, in fact. Those ideas were a compromise between what we think is our right and between what the Israelis presented as their position. The Americans came with a

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compromise to salvage the peace process and reactivate the negotiations. Unfortunately, Mr. Netanyahu did not accept those ideas.

PHIL PONCE: Mr. Rahman, briefly, what are the main points of the U.S. agreement that the Palestinians have agreed to?

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: We accepted the percentage the Americans proposed, which is 13 percent, 13.1 percent. Why we asked for 30 percent, according to the agreement that we had signed with the Israelis before.

PHIL PONCE: You're talking about much land--how much--

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: Yes.

PHIL PONCE: How much for a withdrawal from the West Bank?

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: Yes. A fraction of what we feel that is our right under the Oslo accord. Second, we accepted the idea about cessation of Israeli settlement activity, which is confiscation of land, Palestinian land, construction of homes, building of settlements, et cetera. Unilateral actions done by Israel in violation of the letter and spirit of the Oslo Accord. And, third, we accepted American proposal for security arrangement between us and the Israelis. After we implement all of those, we move to final status talks.

PHIL PONCE: Final status dealing with a large--

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: Yes. Resolve issues--the borders--

PHIL PONCE: --the borders--et cetera--

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: The settlements--Jerusalem, the refugees, all the issues that are left to be discussed between us and the Israelis.

PHIL PONCE: Mr. Ben- David.

LENNY BEN-DAVID: I'm not surprised that some of these issues the Palestinians were willing to accept. First of all, receiving land virtually without surrendering anything in return. Of course, they'll accept that. On the issue--by the way, there's no statement in Oslo of the percentages that one has to give up. In fact, the United States very clearly stated in a letter from Secretary of State Warren Christopher to Netanyahu that Israel determines the--what it has to give up for its security. And so that's an issue based on American assurances that we will determine, and we're very close to the American idea. But that's a principle we have to agree to. Moreover, there's no mention in the Oslo Accords of the young settlement issue. Where there is mention is confidence building measures And I have to state on the issue that you're so magnanimously granting us the security measures we're willing to take, those security measures are some you agreed to in the Oslo Accords and in the Hebron Accords 18 months ago. And we have yet to see a proper number of policemen, we've yet to see confiscation of the weaponry that is held illegally. We've yet to see a bonafide crackdown on the terrorism structure. There's been a start but even Jamie Rubin says it's only a start and more is expected.

PHIL PONCE: Jamie Rubin, the spokesperson for the State Department. What is the reaction to the security concerns?

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: This, the whole Oslo Accords, this whole peace process is based on the principle of Israel returning the land it occupied in 1967 in exchange for peace, land for peace as per Resolution 242 and the Oslo Accords and the Madrid Conference. The Oslo Accords stipulate that Israel should withdraw all its forces from all the West Bank and Gaza, with the exception of those areas that will be discussed in the final step, mainly the settlements and Jerusalem and the borders and the military locations. In our estimations, those are 10 percent of the West Bank, therefore, according to Oslo, Israel should withdraw from 90 percent and not only 13 percent. Israel return to the Palestinians 27 percent in the first phase. The second phase the Americans proposing 13 percent and then we will have a third phase which the government of Mr. Netanyahu agreed to. Now, as far as the settlements is concerned, the Oslo Accords stipulate clearly that Israel should and the Palestinians cease all unilateral action that will

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prejudge the outcome of the final status negotiations. This include the settlements and Mr. Rabin, the late Rabin, did not expand the settlements and did not build any new settlements, and not only that, but he stopped all the incentives given to these settlers, which--

PHIL PONCE: I'd like to get Mr.--

HASSAN ABDEL- RAHMAN: --this government restored.

PHIL PONCE: Mr. Ben-David.

LENNY BEN-DAVID: Hassan, nowhere in Oslo does it talk about 90 percent. Nowhere in Oslo--

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: I didn't say 90 percent.

LENNY BEN-DAVID: Yes, you did.

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: I said all the West Bank accept.

LENNY BEN-DAVID: And you said, your estimate--

PHIL PONCE: Mr. Ben-David, go ahead, continue.

LENNY BEN-DAVID: In any case, Oslo was built on confidence building, and it's not a question of Israel giving and the Palestinians taking. It's a confidence building whereby there would be interim steps. We were to give up 80 percent of Hebron, our second holiest city, in return for things such as the security issue. It's a confidence building. Hassan, this is the period, this is a time when we can build confidence on both sides, therefore, this is a time for the Palestinians to live up to those agreements that were made 18 months ago that we've yet to see enacted. This is a time to stop the incitement. This is the time for--I would call on Chairman Arafat to issue a statement to the minister of education to say stop television and radio incitement against Jews, to stop the praise of the bombers. This is a confidence building time. I welcome Secretary Albright's involvement and the president's involvement in this. Let's move ahead on a broad range and move ahead towards the next final--the final step. But nowhere has anyone agreed to 90 percent.

PHIL PONCE: Mr. Rahman, let's move on to another issue, and that is the dynamics of the state of the peace process. Would you say that there is increased pressure from countries other than Israel and constituents, other than the Palestinians, that there is increased pressure on the two sides to come to a deal?

HASSAN ABDEL- RAHMAN: Well, we are willing to come to a deal. We have done everything possible to come to a deal. We said- -I said that we came from 30 percent, which we feel that it is our right to accept 13 percent, the American proposals. The American proposals by no means are our position. They are a compromise. I agree that confidence building measures are needed between us and the Israelis, but I want Mr. David to tell me how building settlements and confiscation of land can build settlements with the Palestinians. This is--really goes against the whole spirit of the peace process. Why we did not have the same problem that we are having with this government with the previous Israeli government? There was confidence between us and the Israelis, because they treated us as their partners in this peace process.

PHIL PONCE: A quick reaction, then your thoughts on increased pressure from the outside.

LENNY BEN-DAVID: On the issue of settlements there have been no new settlements built under the Netanyahu government either. But the principle that was held under the Rabin government, which there was expansion of settlements, the natural growth of settlements, these communities, these towns and villages that Hassan calls settlements are not military camps. This is where people live, and these people will grow, people will have families, people will--and these communities will grow, as do the Palestinian communities, and, in fact, the amount of building that's been done in the Palestinian communities is vast and goes far beyond legal limits as well.

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PHIL PONCE: And the issue of pressure, Madeleine Albright said that if the U.S.--the U.S. would have to re-examine its position in the peace process if this latest initiative fails. More pressure on the Israeli side?

LENNY BEN-DAVID: I think it's pressure on all of us, but as far as Israel is concerned, the pressure is internal. We want peace. We want peace, and we want peace in a way that we can live in peace with our neighbors in security. We don't want terrorism growing. We don't like to know that there's a bomber in the next community. And even if that bomber should blow himself up in an accident, he'll be praised as a martyr. We would like to sit with neighbors in a neighborly relationship.

PHIL PONCE: So what happens next?

LENNY BEN-DAVID: What happens next is I hope that the negotiators--my colleagues in London--can sit with Mr. Hassan's colleagues and with Americans to work out this broad base of issues. And it's not just an issue of settlements, and it's not just an issue of territory. We are willing to open up the Palestinian airport in Gaza. We are willing to open up an industrial park to help employ 20,000 Palestinians. However, at this stage I hope that our colleagues can go and build the confidence, can move ahead on this. This is part of the issues.

PHIL PONCE: Mr. Rahman, do you believe the two sides will meet in Washington next Monday?

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: I'm sure that they will meet in Washington.

PHIL PONCE: You're optimistic it will happen?

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: It will happen, but let me say something. You know, this whole issue--peace between us and Israelis--is based on the principle of two people living next to each other in two separate states. Either Israel accepts the right of the Palestinians to self-determination on 20 percent of historic Palestine--while we accept them on 80 percent--this is the whole concept. But come and talk to me about an airport or about safe passage, those are very important issues, but those are not the basic issues that concern the Palestinians. The Palestinians want to live as a free people without Israeli domination or anybody else's occupation.

PHIL PONCE: Do you feel equally confident that the two sides will meet in Washington on Monday?

LENNY BEN-DAVID: I feel confident they will, especially since 98 percent of the Palestinian now live under the Palestinian authority. And it's an issue that we're helped in the confidence building measures, we will help to build the Palestinian entity that you seek, which requires an airport, which requires employment, and let us build these confidence measures together. Don't--

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: But let's build--next to Israel.

LENNY BEN-DAVID: That's an element, as you agree--

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: Next to Israel to live in peace--

LENNY BEN- DAVID: That was agreed upon to be negotiated in the final status, Hassan, so you can't jump ahead. Let's build the confidence till we get to that point.

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: We have to lead to that.

LENNY BEN-DAVID: Correct. Don't jump ahead.

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: Absolutely. So you and I agree that the Israeli state next to a Palestinian state--living in peace--as good neighbors in cooperation. And I assure you then we will have a lasting and permanent peace in our region.

LENNY BEN-DAVID: Hassan, give me the confidence, build the confidence among the Israeli people--

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: We will do it.

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LENNY BEN-DAVID: --and the American negotiators that you will want to live in that status, go after the terrorism, close down the terrorist organizations.

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: We have done everything possible, and we will continue to do it.

LENNY BEN-DAVID: I hope that was the case.

HASSAN ABDEL-RAHMAN: That's not the issue. The issue is whether Israel will withdraw from Palestinian territories that it occupied in 1967, where we can build our state next to your state and live both of our people as equal people, in freedom, dignity, and as good neighbors.

PHIL PONCE: Gentlemen, I'm afraid that's where we have to leave it. I thank you both for being here tonight.

HASSAN ABDEL- RAHMAN: Thank you.

LENNY BEN-DAVID: Thank you, Phil.

#### FOCUS - HMO'S AND THE LAW

JIM LEHRER: Still to come on the NewsHour tonight, suing HMO's for malpractice, an update on the Euro, and a Roger Rosenblatt essay.

JIM LEHRER: Tom Bearden has the HMO story.

TOM BEARDEN: Jerry Cannon's wife died from leukemia in 1992. He thinks she might be alive today if her health insurance company had approved a bone marrow transplant in time. Phyllis Cannon was diagnosed with acute leukemia in 1991. But there was hope.

JERRY CANNON: The doctor told us that a bone marrow transplant was the only cure for her disease. And I looked in my insurance policy, and it said it would cover it, and I called the insurance company, and they said they would cover it.

TOM BEARDEN: The doctor said Phyllis had to undergo chemotherapy first because the transplant couldn't be done until the cancer was in remission. Almost a year later, the Cannons found out that Phyllis was in remission. They went to the doctor's office in nearby Oklahoma City to arrange the transplant. But after they left--

JERRY CANNON: The phone rings about 5 o'clock. They had called to get authorization from the insurance company, which, you know, which you need to do, and they denied it. They said they wouldn't do it. You know, and I was in disbelief. I said, this can't be correct.

TOM BEARDEN: Blue Links of Oklahoma City, a Blue Cross HMO, was refusing to pay for the \$150,000 operation. The Cannons received a letter saying, "Phyllis Cannon does not qualify for the transplant." The policy had been changed, and it wasn't covered anymore. Jerry Cannon appealed the decision to the HMO's grievance committee. After two months, the Cannons received another letter saying Blue Links had reversed the decision and would provide benefits for a bone marrow transplant. But it was too late. That two months proved to be fatal when Jerry Cannon took his wife back to the doctor to prepare for the transplant.

JERRY CANNON: At that time they told her that the leukemia was back and that she'd have to go through the chemotherapy again, and the bone marrow transplant was not possible.

TOM BEARDEN: Phyllis Cannon died a few weeks later.

JERRY CANNON: After a period of time, I went to see an attorney, and told him the story, and then he asked me the question: Do you pay for your insurance, or does your employer pay for your insurance? I said, in my case I pay for it. Phyllis's employer pays hers. He says, I'm sorry, I can't help you. He says, there's a law called ERISA. And he says, based on this law, you can't sue your insurance company for wrongful death or bad faith.



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TOM BEARDEN: That is, you can't sue if your employer pays for your insurance. ERISA, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, was passed by Congress in the 1970's. It was designed to shield pension and benefit plans from lawsuits, but it had the unintended effect of exempting HMO's from being sued for medical malpractice. Congressman Charlie Norwood says the Cannon case is not unique. Norwood is a conservative Republican from Georgia and a former small town dentist. He recently held a congressional field hearing in Augusta where consumers testified on coverage problems with their HMO's.

REP. CHARLES NORWOOD, [R] Georgia: There is no industry in this country today, other than the federally-governed health insurance, that enjoys a congressionally-mandated shield from any liability for their actions. Nowhere else in our society can one person intentionally injure another and just simply get away with it.

TOM BEARDEN: Norwood has introduced a bill in Congress that would change ERISA and permit consumers to sue an HMO for malpractice.

REP. CHARLES NORWOOD: What we're saying is that if you want to make medical decisions, decisions of medical necessity, then you have to be responsible for those decisions in a state court of law. I think that's pretty reasonable. If you don't do that, then 160 million people lose their rights, their due process of law. There's nowhere to turn.

TOM BEARDEN: But Karen Ignani says that the decisions HMO's make don't qualify as medical decisions. Ignani is president of the American Association of Health Plans, which represents more than a thousand HMO's, PPO's, and other similar insurers.

KAREN IGNANI, American Association of Health Plans: If the physician is told that he or she should not proceed with a particular course of treatment, this is based on evidence-based protocols based on the best practices in treating and dealing with a particular form of - a particular problem, if you will.

TOM BEARDEN: HMO's claim they issue guidelines for procedures that experience has shown render the best outcome for the patient and that guidelines are not medical decisions. Attorney Jo Slama disagrees.

JO SLAMA, Lawyer: If they're overriding the medical doctor's decision and recommendation about treatment, they are making medical decisions. No matter how you want to characterize it, that's, in fact, what they're doing.

TOM BEARDEN: Slama was the one lawyer Jerry Cannon found in Oklahoma willing to take his case and challenge ERISA in the courts. The judge ruled in favor of the HMO, saying that according to federal law, Cannon could not sue. Slama appealed, taking the case all the way to the Supreme Court. But the high court refused to hear it. Blue Links refused our request for an on-camera interview, but a spokesperson said the HMO agreed with the court's decision. Attorney Slama has long specialized in ERISA cases. She told producer Mary Beth Dirken she's seen more people seeking legal action against their HMO's.

JO SLAMA: With more and more HMO's and more and more people becoming insured by HMO's, we are seeing more of these types of cases. Frankly, I attribute that to the fact that HMO's know that they can automatically deny claims and very rarely will they ever be challenged either through their administrative appeals process or through the court system.

TOM BEARDEN: Not so, says Karen Ignani. She contends the ERISA shield has no bearing on the decisions HMO's make.

KAREN IGNANI: I'm very pleased to report to you there was a recent study released just last fall that showed that, on average, only 3 percent of procedures that were recommended by physicians were ever denied, which means that 97 percent were approved.

TOM BEARDEN: The report the Managed Care Association refers to was a 1995 Blue Cross-Blue Shield survey of 2,003 practicing physicians nationwide, of which 53 percent responded. But attorney Slama says she sees something different.

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JO SLAMA: I'm just one lawyer in Oklahoma City, and I see case after case after case. I get phone calls literally every day from people who are being denied care.

TOM BEARDEN: A number of congressmen and senators say they've been besieged by constituent complaints about HMO's. Norwood's bill has amassed 224 co-sponsors from urban liberals to liberal conservatives, equally split between Republicans and Democrats. It's called PARCA, the Patient Access to Responsible Care Act. At the same time, 26 states have also introduced bills that would allow consumers to sue their HMO's for medical malpractice. Texas was the first to pass such a bill just last summer. But it's uncertain whether a state law would override a federal statute. And, in fact, AETNA has brought suit challenging the Texas law. It's the federal PARCA bill that has employers like Jim Greene more worried because it would apply to all 50 states and be undisputable. Greene's a risk manager for Justin Industries, a \$450 million company in Ft. Worth that makes cowboy boots. Greene was part of an unsuccessful lobbying effort to defeat the Texas law. He believes PARCA would lead to costly court battles and higher insurance premiums.

JIM GREENE, Justin Industries: I can only tell you that the studies that have been done--an independent accounting firm, Milliman and Robertson, did an analysis of PARCA, and they estimated the increase in health care cost, if PARCA were enacted as it's currently written, between 23 and 39 percent.

REP. CHARLES NORWOOD, [R] Georgia: That's nonsense. I mean, that is so unreal it's nonsense. Our actuarial firm came up with cost of increase premium somewhere between .7 and 2 percent. Our bill will increase some, but it will protect the lives of many people.

TOM BEARDEN: Regardless of how large the increase is, many employers say they'll have to pass it on to their employees in the end. They argue that fewer employees would be able to afford insurance as a result. And so a number of large corporations have joined health management companies to lobby for the defeat of the bill, claiming it won't benefit consumers but only set off a flood of litigation that would primarily benefit lawyers.

JIM GREENE: Lawsuits only help the heirs, if you will, of the person's who now no longer with us and the attorney who filed the lawsuit. That's a wrong end of the solution. Wouldn't it be better that if you have a dispute over a coverage issue or a recommendation for a treatment issue that there be some mediation process with a very tight time line that says if there's a coverage question, it's going to go to an arbitration panel of qualified medical providers to determine whether or not number one, it's medically necessary, number two, whether it's covered under the terms of the policy contract?

TOM BEARDEN: Ignani suggests that strengthening the appeals and grievance processes that most HMO's already have in place is a better solution to the problem than costly court battles.

KAREN IGNANI: Should government basically come in and micro manage the way these systems work and micro manage the whole process of patient-physician communication and micro manage the way physicians deal with the health plan? I think not.

TOM BEARDEN: But Slama says without government involvement, HMO's have all the power.

JO SLAMA: When the evidence is all submitted through the appeals process for an appeal, who is making the decision? Not a court, not an independent arbitrator, not an independent third party, not even an independent health care provider. It's the very HMO that denied the care in the first place. So what kind of an appeal is that? What people are giving up when they buy their insurance through their employer is a chance to have a judge and a jury of their peers make that decision and, instead, turning that right over to the very insurance company that denied them in the first place.

TOM BEARDEN: Congressman Norwood thinks the solution has to be in the courts.

REP. CHARLES NORWOOD: Now, I understand how the other side is scared to death of this because of the legal system. They fear frivolous lawsuits; they fear the deep pocket syndrome. Does it mean that there are a group of trial lawyers who will try to take advantage of the system? Absolutely. But that's not a good enough reason to deny due process of law to 160 million American people. Let's have legal reform. That's the other side of this coin.

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TOM BEARDEN: Jerry Cannon flew all the way from Oklahoma City to Augusta to testify at Norwood's hearing, hoping some day if PARCA passes, he'll get his day in court.

JERRY CANNON: First of all, I'd like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to come in and visit with you about this issue.

TOM BEARDEN: Cannon may have to wait until next year for results. The bill hasn't yet made it out of committee and faces opposition from key Republican leaders, who say it will end up making health care more expensive.

#### NEWSMAKER

JIM LEHRER: Now the Euro and the new Europe. Kwame Holman has some background.

KWAME HOLMAN: Last weekend in Brussels, leaders of the European Union officially named the eleven countries that have agreed to adopt the Euro as their currency. However, instead of a celebration, the occasion was marked by a bitter dispute between German and French officials that threatened to throw the adoption of the new currency off track. It took a five hour lunch and more hours of tense negotiations to settle the issue over who would run the new European Central Bank. French President Jacques Chirac was the lone voice for appointing Frenchman Jean-Claude Trichet. In a compromise, it was agreed Germany's choice, Dutchman Wim Duisenberg, would head the bank but yield the job to the Frenchman halfway through an eight-year term. Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, tried to put the best face on the controversy.

REPORTER: But it was a lunch that took five hours, it seems it was a bit of a shambles.

BERTIE AHERN: No, it wasn't a shambles, I think we are at a very historic occasion. We're at a time when we are making major achievements, accommodating all that's happened in Europe over the last number of years, but getting ready for enlargement. So it is proper that these matters are dealt with in a comprehensive and constructive way and that's happened today.

KWAME HOLMAN: The difficult birth of the Euro this weekend reflects the long struggle toward a United Europe. Out of the devastation of World War II came the idea of a European Common Market. First, some national coal and steel industries were put under a common authority. That was followed by the creation of the six-member European Economic Community in 1957. Since then, through a number of name changes, additional members, arduous negotiations, and painful economic preparation, the continent edged closer to the goal of a unified economy. Now the smooth functioning of monetary policy and the new currency will be the responsibility of the European Central Bank based in Frankfurt, Germany's financial capital. Wim Duisenberg spoke about the launch of the European Monetary Union or EMU.

WIM DUISENBERG: With respect to the preparations for EMU, both the EMI, as well as the Central Banks, are on track. Indeed, as far as we all are concerned, EMU can start on the first of January, 1999.

KWAME HOLMAN: The Euro will be the basis for non-cash transactions until 2002 when colorful, faceless notes and coins will go into circulation, replacing the national currencies of 11 countries. Britain, Denmark, and Sweden chose not to join for now and Greece did not meet the EMU'S economic criteria. The new monetary union or Euroland, as some already are calling it, will comprise almost 300 million people, with a Gross Domestic Product of more than \$5 trillion--20 percent of the global economy and roughly comparable to the United States output.

JIM LEHRER: And to Elizabeth Farnsworth in San Francisco.

ELIZABETH FARNSWORTH: And with us now is Jacques Santer, president of the European Commission, the executive body of the European Union. A former prime minister of Luxembourg, President Santer has held his present position since 1995. Thank you very much for being with us, Mr. President.

JACQUES SANTER, President, European Commission: Good evening.



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ELIZABETH FARNSWORTH: A political compromise solved the squabble, or resolved the squabble this weekend. Does that mean the Central Bank will be politicized from now on, as some have charged?

JACQUES SANTER: Not at all. We established the European Central Bank, which would be independent and the quarrel of the personalities between Mr. Duisenberg or Mr. Trichet--there was not a difference in the policies. They are two outstanding personalities, two governors of banks. And they are all together in favor of an independent European Central Bank. So there is no risk that European Central Bank would give up their independence--the contrary.

ELIZABETH FARNSWORTH: And yet the president of Germany's powerful Central Bank criticized the compromise and said that it had compromised the Euro's birth.

JACQUES SANTER: We have to say that Wim Duisenberg is now appointed for a term of eight years. And it's up to him to take his decision if he would resign after the transition period, let's say 2002. There is no indication of that yet, and after that there would be Mr. Trichet as president of the bank. So we are in the very good situation, in the happy situation that we would have two outstanding presidents of the European Central Bank.

ELIZABETH FARNSWORTH: Mr. President, how big of a challenge will it be in the future--four countries to give up their sovereign monetary policies? I mean, they pledged to do this, and yet, France has its own ideas for how its monetary policy should be. Germany does too. How will they resolve these problems?

JACQUES SANTER: Of course. That's a very important moment. It's an historic event, and the most important one since the signature of the treaty of Rome, since the 25th of March of 1957. So we have to be aware of this very important date of European unification and invigoration. And as 11 countries put together their money in a single currency, that's to say that they are--that they have the faith that we need further economic integration, economic integration because we created a single market of 370 million inhabitants. But it did not function as an integrated economic market like the American market, for instance, because it's very difficult to have a proper function of a single market with 15 different currencies without creating any distortions. So this is a step forward in the economic integration of the single markets. It gives also our economy the possibility to valorize all these potentialities as a single market. And that is the reason why the 11 countries and I think also some other countries who would join the 11 afterwards, they created this historic moment in the history of Europe.

ELIZABETH FARNSWORTH: So, for example, let's just look at a couple of examples--if France, for example, needs a more expansive monetary policy to fight unemployment, how would it do that, what instruments would it use through the Central Bank to get that?

JACQUES SANTER: We have to be clear. The European Central Bank has to guarantee price stability and therefore, it's only the Central Bank, in the competence of the Central Bank, that's a monetary policy. On the other hand, we have as a counsel of the Euro, which--where the 11 member states have to reach members of the monetary union, have to coordinate their economic and--policy--in relation of--of the monetary policy. So I think we have to make a separation between one hand the monetary policy, on the other hand the coordination as a political policy. But all the parties, all the members have to respect--as we call it--criteria of the Maastricht Treaty, as they are now enshrined in the--as we call it--the fact of stability and close, and therefore they are all the members states are committed to a fiscal discipline, and that is why it's so important to link all the member states together.

ELIZABETH FARNSWORTH: Do you think, Mr. President, that the Euro will eventually replace the dollar as the world's number one currency?

JACQUES SANTER: No, that's not our aim. That's not our first aim. Of course, as--there is an important monetary zone--inhabitants--20 percent of the GDP and of international trade--that would be a very effective currency, and it would play let's say a role as a stabilization-- as a stabilizer factor in the international relations, in the monetary, and the economic international relations alongside with the dollar and the yen. It's not up to--it's not our intention to replace the dollar but, nevertheless, I think the United

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States and the Europeans, they have an interest that we would have on both sides, strong, stable, and credible currencies.

ELIZABETH FARNSWORTH: The treaty establishing the European Monetary Union explicitly called for moving towards political union too. Do you think that is what is coming for Europe and including more unified policies on defense, for example, on foreign policy?

JACQUES SANTER: Of course. I think also Europe is something which is helpful in this direction because--and the showing also for the United States but also for other countries in the past that the currency is very important factor of political integration. The currency gives also an identity to a nation and--I hope so--that also Europe gives some more identity, a political identity to the European Union. But, nevertheless, we have to work, we have to deepen our political integration for the further, that we have to create the common foreign and security policy, so that Europe has to take all the--let's say the political consequences for this economic weight and the economic dimension. So that is--so that Europe can also play a major political role in the international environment.

ELIZABETH FARNSWORTH: Do you see any signs that the economic union and the negotiations that have led to it are already leading to any more unity in foreign affairs, for example, in Kosovo, where ethnic differences between Serbs and Albanians has led to such fighting?

JACQUES SANTER: Of course. We are very committed with our American friends and with our allies, how we can intervene in this--in Kosovo--also in other parts of the world. I think we have to play this political role. We are in some cases a paymaster, and we want also not only to be the contributor but also to play a political role, and, therefore, I think what would be very important is to have deepening, political deepening of our integration, and, therefore, the decisions taken this weekend would play also a major role in the evolution, the political evolution of Europe in the future.

ELIZABETH FARNSWORTH: Mr. President, you and the leaders of Germany and France and other European countries right now lived through World War II. I recognize you were very young. But did that experience propel you and compel you to work hard on this--this unity and this unification of Europe?

JACQUES SANTER: Of course. I think Europe is a political project. We have to have a political vision of Europe. It's not only a market. It's not only a single currency. But it's also a political project on the project of peace, of peace and freedom. And we are living now in Europe our longest period of peace we ever witnessed and sent as a great as a great achievement of Europe, and, therefore, we have to stick to this political project and therefore, we have also now to enlarge our union to the Eastern countries, to the new democracies, because we have now for the first time since more than 500 years, since the 14th century the unique chance to unite our continent in peace and freedom. And we have to succeed in it. So it's a marvelous chance we have, and, therefore it's also for us a moral obligation that also these countries, these new democracies, former Communist countries, could have also--can become full members of the European Union to--precisely to share with us our coming vision--a vision of peace and freedom.

ELIZABETH FARNSWORTH: Well, President Santer, thank you very much for being with us.

JACQUES SANTER: Thank you.

#### ESSAY - CLOUDSPLITTER

JIM LEHRER: Finally tonight essayist Roger Rosenblatt considers a new novel called "Cloudsplitter."

ROGER ROSENBLATT: Near the end of Russell Banks's monumental novel about the abolitionist John Brown Owen, Brown's third son, the narrator of the piece, asks his father: "You know Gods mind?". John Brown answers: "Yes, the Lord speaks to me." Brown leaves no doubt that he believes that is so. John Brown, the most famous radical in American history, he of the abortive raid on the federal arsenal of Harper's Ferry, Virginia, and who was hanged for it; he who slaughtered men, women, and children gladly for the purity of his anti-slavery cause; and he was equally made and right was the archetype of the dangerous, terrifying, driven, inspired zealot. Born in the romantic age, John Brown was the perfect Byronic romantic. God spoke to him. Banks's novel is both about the man and the idea of the man, about

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those terrible and blessedly rare moments in history where a mad man is required to do the right thing and where the exercise of virtue seems to demand sin. Because the greater sin was human slavery, Brown felt empowered by God to smite pro-slavery forces, who are also people. And smite he did, as Banks writes in the smoke and blood of Kansas, with the bodies of men and boys hacked to death with machetes and lying in chunks, steaming like fresh meat. How could such furious brutality ever be forgiven? And did the Civil War, which Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry almost certainly brought on, justify Brown's cold-blooded rage? Did his madness save America's soul? This moral question goes so deep it makes one quiver even today when slavery is long past and radicalism is the stuff of memoirs. Had this novel come out in the 1960's, it might have seemed a road map to the times. The 1960's have radicals aplenty, so-called, who raged at the powerful in the government and anti-Vietnam War demonstrations. The trouble was that most of those radicals had compromised motives, little nerve, and were merely playing at righteousness. The ones who killed with guns and bombs had John Brown's murderousness but not his cause. At the opposite end of the revolutionary scale one looks to Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., who had the causes but not the madness. No. To find an analogue to Brown one must go to the bloody French Revolution or the bloody Russian Revolution, neither of which wound up solving the problems they meant to shoot or behead. John Brown, mad and murderous as he was, effected a true national cleansing. So was his fanaticism worth it? Probably. Though one would not want all the corrections of history to be entrusted to the hands of a John Brown. Banks's novel is as much about a man as a problem, and the man was huge, Old Testament. When he is out of the novel, it is as if the sun is clouded. The novel is called "Cloudsplitter" after the mountain that loomed over Brown's farm in the Adirondacks. Brown, himself, was a cloudsplitter, part of America's moral and deadly landscape, which has rustled Banks' proven territory. Banks is establishing himself as one of America's lastingly great writers in books like "Continental Drift," "Affliction," and the "Sweet Hereafter" by prying open the granite of the American mind and examining it with love and severity. Now he gives us John Brown, laden with more love and severity than any mortal ought to bear. But the point is not to show how distanced he is from the rest of us but, rather, how close he is. In a scene in which he beats son, Owen, with a leather strap for having stolen his grandfather's pocket watch, then hands over the strap to Owen to beat him for having reared a sinful son, Brown explains that all of us are connected in all our thoughts and deeds. We too are both liberators and murderers. We too can go mad with righteousness, and sometimes we too hear God speak to us. If that were not so, we would not at once be horrified by John Brown and fear him and acknowledge him as a savior. I'm Roger Rosenblatt.

## RECAP

JIM LEHRER: Again, the major stories of this Tuesday, the Middle East peace talks in London ended with both sides invited to continue meeting next Monday in Washington; the Associated Press reported President Clinton's claim of executive privilege in the Monica Lewinsky case was rejected by a federal judge; and the Whitewater grand jury in Arkansas concluded its two-year investigation of business dealings by then Governor and Mrs. Clinton. We'll see you on- line and again here tomorrow evening. I'm Jim Lehrer. Thank you and good night.

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 1998

Palestinians want new U.S. proposal; Israelis opposed USA TODAY March 30, 1998, Monday,

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WASHINGTON -- The Clinton administration is debating whether to unveil its own plan as early as this week for reviving the stalled Middle East peace process, a move that would anger Israel but please Palestinian leaders.

At issue: whether Secretary of State Madeleine Albright should declare an impasse in the process, and then lay out a proposal to salvage it. A decision to take this step will come only after U.S. envoy Dennis Ross completes his latest diplomatic mission to the region.

Albright has a forum for a major statement Thursday when she speaks to a national convention of newspaper editors. But State Department officials are trying to downplay that possibility, saying the timing would be difficult. Ross, who met Sunday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, will just be returning from his trip. Clinton does not return from a 12-day, six-country trip to Africa until Thursday evening.

Israeli officials have lobbied vigorously to stop Albright from going public.

Netanyahu and Clinton spoke twice in three days as Israel feared the American plan was about to surface. The first conversation, on March 19, was tense, Israeli officials say, with neither side showing signs of compromise.

Then Netanyahu sent a letter to Clinton through the Israeli Embassy in Washington. In it, he demonstrated willingness to modify Israel's proposal and give up more land to Palestinians in the West Bank. By the time Netanyahu and Clinton spoke again on March 21, the atmosphere had thawed and the tone was more positive. Clinton

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decided to send Ross to the Middle East.

Netanyahu, for his part, dispatched aides to Washington, including famous former Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky, Israel's trade minister. They lobbied the administration and key American Jewish groups against the move, with some success.

"There would be a lot of concern about this in our community," says Malcom Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. "It might be misunderstood by the Palestinians, who believe if they keep holding back, the United States will deliver Israel."

Hoenlein says he believes concerns of the American Jewish community prompted a conference call by Albright last Friday to the 55 Jewish leaders in his group. He says Albright insisted there was "no ultimatum and no second-guessing of Israel's security. They've simply put forward their ideas."

Clinton, who is seen in Israel and by American Jewish leaders in the United States as an ally of the Jewish state, has been reluctant to cross Israel publicly. In a letter to Hoenlein in December, he said that when the United States and Israel "have differences, we address them directly with each other, as close friends should. I fully agree that we should not try to do so through the media."

Such a change would clearly show frustration by the Clinton administration. But except for what Ross has termed recent "modifications," U.S. officials say the plan is basically the same that Clinton presented to Arafat and Netanyahu during White House visits in January.

It includes a withdrawal of Israeli troops from certain areas of the West Bank in stages, a monitoring committee to evaluate Palestinian efforts against terrorism and a freeze on new Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

For the same reason Israel wants to keep the U.S. plan under wraps, Palestinians are eager for it to be made public. Palestinians want the American proposal surfacing to help them gain leverage in negotiations, even though they feel the amount of territory offered them is far too modest.

"I hope they will go public," says Hassan Abdel Rahman, chief Palestinian representative in Washington. "It would be the first time the United States in this peace process has come up with something publicly other than procedure."

Abdel Rahman likens the situation to the intensive U.S. efforts that forged the 1979 Egypt-Israel peace accords at the presidential retreat at Camp David, Md. "It's a necessary change because the old methods are not working," he says. "The peace process is in dire straits, and only the United States can salvage it."

U.S. officials are casting the impasse in equally dismal terms. That may be an attempt to lay the groundwork for Albright's pronouncement if Ross does not make enough headway.

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State Department spokesman James Rubin says that if Ross "can't convince the leaders of both parties to make some hard decisions, we face the real possibility of disillusionment, of an inability to ever restore the peace process. Time is running out for those who care."

GRAPHIC: PHOTO, b/w, AFP; PHOTO, b/w, Rick Boomer, AP

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